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Open Transport and PPP: Frequently Asked Questions (11/95)

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TOPIC -----

This article includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about Open Transport and point-to-point protocol (PPP).

Questions in this FAQ:

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- 2) Which mdevs are currently supported?
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DISCUSSION -----

1) Question: Is Open Transport compatible with existing Internet Service Providers?

Answer: Open Transport/TCP currently supports dial-up connectivity to TCP/IP networks, including the Internet, through backward compatibility with select third party software models know as "mdevs".

With the appropriate mdev software installed, end-nodes can use either Serial Line Internet Protocol (SLIP) or PPP to connect to Internet Service Providers and other dial-up IP-access points. However, not all versions of all mdevs are supported by Open Transport backward compatibility services. It is important that the recommended versions of software be installed for the greatest level of compatibility.

2) Question: Which mdevs are currently supported?

Answer: Open Transport 1.0.7 works with the following MacTCP Link Access Modules (mdevs), with these known caveats.

- FreePPP - version 1.0 or more recent; compatible with Open Transport.
- InterSLIP - Version 1.0.1 is not compatible with Open Transport, you need a later version. InterCon should be contacted directly.
- InterPPP - use version 1.2.9 or more recent.
- InterPPP II - use the most current version.
- MacSLIP - use version 3.0 or more recent; compatible with Open Transport.
- MacPPP - use version 2.1.3sd or more recent (2.2.0 not recommended).

Apple is continuing to work with developers to better support existing mdevs; contact the third party developer of interest for the most recent information on compatibility.

3) Question: Doesn't Apple offer a solution for SLIP or PPP dial-up to the Internet?

Answer: The Apple Internet Connection Kit is a selection of the most popular Internet applications from third party companies, including the Netscape Navigator and RealAudio Player from Progressive Networks, as well as Claris EMailer Lite.

The kit includes MacPPP 2.1.4 along with the Apple Internet Dialer - software designed to make it simpler for Macintosh customers to register with a qualified Internet Service Provider (ISP) and get connected to the Internet. To help users work with their Internet applications, the Apple Internet Connection Kit includes Apple Guide software for on-line assistance.

4) Question: Does the Apple Internet Connection Kit require Open Transport?

Answer: No, the Apple Internet Connection Kit works with either MacTCP 2.0.6 or with Open Transport/TCP 1.0.7 or later.

5) Question: If I need an updated copy of one of these mdevs, how can I get the software?

Answer: Sources for mdev software will vary, as some of the recommended products are commercial and some are shareware or public domain.

- FreePPP is shareware and can be found on a variety of internet sites; typically at "info-mac" mirror sites in the comm/tcp directory. A list of info-mac mirror sites can currently be found at:

<http://www.mcp.com.hayden/iskm/info-mac-mirrors.html>

Some sites where FreePPP can be found as of Oct. 1995 include:

<ftp://mirrors.aol.com/pub/info-mac/comm/tcp/>
<ftp://mirror.apple.com/mirrors/Info-Mac.Archive/comm/tcp/>

- InterSLIP is public domain software developed by InterCon Systems, and is currently available from:

<ftp://ftp.intercon.com/InterCon/sales/InterSLIP/>

- InterPPP and InterPPP II are commercial software products. For availability and ordering information contact InterCon Systems.

- MacSLIP is commercial software available developed by Hyde Park Software. For availability and ordering information contact TriSoft.

- MacPPP (v2.1.4) is available as a component of the Apple Internet Connection Kit, Apple Computer Inc., US 1-800-462-4396 for fax information or 1-800-538-9696 to locate an Apple authorized reseller near you.

The Tech Info Library article titled "Locating Vendor Information" can help you search for InterCon Systems' and TriSoft's address and phone number.

6) Question: Are there other known limitations to backward compatibility mdev support?

Answer: Yes. Due to differences in the underlying architectures between MacTCP and Open Transport/TCP, and some current shortcomings in the backward compatibility services, there are some additional limitations to mdev support:

- Some mdevs, when used with Open Transport, may not be able to auto-dial, that is, automatically connect to the service provider when launching a TCP/IP application. This is being addressed by updated versions of mdevs.

- Some Internet Service Provider do not strictly follow standards practices, which call for assigning end-node IP addresses on the same subnet as the router (gateway). Open Transport strictly enforces this requirement in versions prior to 1.0.7. Beginning with Open Transport 1.0.7, the TCP/IP configuration utility software will automatically generate a compatible router address to facilitate connectivity to the ISP if the user leaves the router address field empty.

- Once a TCP/IP application launches and uses a SLIP or PPP mdev, use of a different mdev may require restarting the Macintosh. Disconnecting from and redialing a service provider may also require restarting the Macintosh. This is planned to be addressed in Open Transport v1.1.

7) Question: Is there documentation available to assist with configuring Open Transport/TCP?

Answer: Yes. Although a full user's guide is planned for release with Open Transport v1.1, configuration tips for Open Transport 1.0.x are already available on various sites on the internet including:

ftp://seeding.apple.com/opentransport/OT_gen_info/TEXT/OTTCP_Config_Tips

8) Question: What additional updates are planned for Open Transport to improve compatibility with dial-up internet access?

Answer: Open Transport 1.1 is planned to include:

- Support for reconnection of a dial-up session without restart.
- Fix for a compatibility problem that could interfere with Qualcomm Eudora users sending short messages.

9) Question: When will Open Transport 1.1 be available?

Answer: Open Transport 1.1 is scheduled to be available in early 1996. For more information regarding Open Transport 1.1, please refer to:

ftp://seeding.apple.com/opentransport/OT_gen_info_/WORD/OT_QA

10) Question: Will Apple provide a SLIP or PPP solution for Open Transport?

Answer: Apple is developing an implementation of PPP for Open Transport as a part of the next generation of Apple Remote Access products. This is planned to support dial-up access to both AppleTalk and TCP/IP networks. Additional details will be announced at a later date.

Article Change History:

- 15 Dec 1995 - Updated Open Transport 1.1 release time frame.
- 22 Nov 1995 - Updated format.
- 15 Nov 1995 - Corrected InterSLIP information.

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