PowerBook Assistant Toolbox: Printing a PostScript File (01/95)

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TOPIC ---

A customer with a PowerBook 500 series computer wants to print to a PostScript
file rather than to a printer. The customer chooses LaserWriter in the Chooser,
but of course, cannot choose a specific printer. The customer activates the
print dialog and selects the destination as a PostScript file, and then clicks
the Save button.

The system displays the dialog message "This document cannot be printed at the
current time on the printer 'LaserWriter' because a printer is not available to
the AppleTalk network." and has two choices: "Exit the dialog - Don't Print", or
"Print Later".

If the customer chooses Print Later, it spools the file to the PrintMonitor, and
does not create the desired file. If the customer removes the Assistant Toolbox,
and restarts, the dialog does not display, and the Postscript file is generated
correctly.

What is the problem here, and what can the customer do about it?

DISCUSSION ---

The PowerBook 500 series computers ship with version 1.1 of the Assistant
Toolbox. It has a deferred printing feature that lets you save a spooled print
file and then print it out later when you return to your printer.

This feature takes over control of the printing from PrintMonitor. Therefore, it
interrupts printing to put up the preceding dialog before PrintMonitor figures
out that a PostScript file was being requested. So, if your choose Print Later,
it only makes the spool file, and doesn't even try to print the file until you
reconnect to the network. Once you do this, you get a dialog that asks if you
are ready to print, and if so, it generates the PostScript file.

If you disable the Background Printing option in the Chooser, and go through the
preceding steps, you still get the Print Later dialog. However, if you choose
Print Later, it immediately generates the PostScript file since PrintMonitor is
not active to make a spool file. This is a little confusing, but does produce
the desired result.

The only other way to get this to work is to remove the Assistant Toolbox
extension and then restart, which disables the whole Print Later option.

This issue only applies to version 1.1 of the Toolbox, and has been brought to
Engineering to address in possible future releases.

Article Change History:
11 Jan 1995 - Added keyword and made several minor technical updates.

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