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MacTCP: Information on Version 2.0.6 (8/94)

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TOPIC -----

I understand there will be a new release of MacTCP soon. Are there any specific details available on new features or bug fixes?

DISCUSSION -----

There will be a bug fix revision to MacTCP beyond the current 2.0.4. For some originally silly, but now sacred (or at least superstitious) reasons, we'll skip the odd-numbered 2.0.5 and go straight to 2.0.6.

This is not a full-scale bug fix release, and it is certainly not a feature enhancement release. We're trying very hard to keep all the engineering attention on the next generation Open Transport/TCP, so that we can bring you nifty things like IP Multicast support and reconfiguration without requiring a machine reboot. But occasionally, there comes a time when a specific bug fix can't be postponed.

Many of you have heard of the new AppleSearch/WAIS gateway. Obviously, it depends on MacTCP. During the final QA testing on the gateway, we discovered a bug in the MacTCP dnr that can cause a system crash. This bug is extremely rare in all normal circumstances, but the demands that the WAIS gateway places on the dnr at not normal - in fact, it is a very high stress client of the dnr. Since this is a crashing bug, and since we expect that AppleSearch/WAIS gateway customers would be likely to encounter the bug, we felt that a maintenance upgrade was in order. Thus, the gateway will ship with MacTCP 2.0.6 installed.

For all other MacTCP users, there is only one other change that might lead you to install MacTCP 2.0.6. MacTCP 2.0.4 has a peculiarity in the way that it handles BootP when the BootP server is on a different subnet than the client Mac. This is not a crashing bug, and workarounds are possible. However, in certain configurations, Macs will apparently fail to find the BootP server on the network. The Mac is actually receiving the response from the server, but is being very "picky" about the information in the header. In these certain cases, the Mac rejects/drops the response packet, because it considered the header to contain invalid information. The RFC does not specify that this test be made, so we stopped making it. Thus, the 2.0.6 build fixes this "bug" -- translation, improves interoperability in the real world.

There are no other changes, and no other users need upgrade. It won't hurt

anything if you do, but it won't help anything either. In particular, in order to meet the needs of the AppleSearch team and their shipping schedule, we are continuing to postpone other requested changes related to the DNR's memory management. Customers running BIND 4.9.3(x) have experienced out-of-memory situations that result from the "verbose" behavior of such DNS installations. We'll keep monitoring this situation, and try to make the right decision as time goes on. Again, Open Transport/TCP is not that far away, and we want to keep focused on that if at all possible.

MacTCP 2.0.6 will be released electronically, at no upgrade fee. It will probably be in the form of a "patcher" such as was initially done for MacTCP 2.0.4. If you decide that you need 2.0.6, you will need to be at MacTCP 2.0.4 to apply the 2.0.6 patch. And, as I already noted, it will be preinstalled on the AppleSearch/WAIS gateway.

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