Color LW 12/600 PS: TCP/IP Printing Freezes Printer (12/96)

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TOPIC ---

This article describes an issue when printing from a SPARCstation through TCP/IP
to a Color LaserWriter 12/600 PS printer.

DISCUSSION --

Test Case

The /usr/openwin/share/images/tiger.ps file is a sample PostScript file that
comes with Solaris 2.4. When printed by a standard lp configuration on a
SPARCstation 4, 10, or 20, the Color LaserWriter 12/600 PS printer's green light
stops flashing. The print job will never be printed.

Symptom

Printing through TCP/IP causes the Color LaserWriter printer's light to blink at
a variable rate -- as data is received. If the green light starts blinking,
locks on, or stays off, then the print job has failed to transmit properly.
Customers may also notice the larger the job, the greater the chances of
locking.

In some cases, the printer will also stop responding to TCP/IP pings, AppleTalk
print jobs, or chooser NBP lookups.

Cause

Packet trace analysis indicates that the Color LaserWriter printer transmits an
invalid sequence number that is too large. This happens under certain
conditions, the probability rises with the size of the print job. This causes
the SPARCstation and Color LaserWriter to exchange a storm of ACK packets that
never agree on the next sequence number.

Solution (short term)

UNIX administrators should restart printing from their UNIX systems and restart

the printer. This will shut down the packet storm and clear the job from the
printer. UNIX administrators should also remove the file from the print queue to
prevent reoccurrence of problem.

Customers Affected

The scope of this problem is unknown, because we have not received many RTA's.
Apple believes few customers realize they have this problem.

Troubleshooting Protocol

Customers that describe Color LaserWriter freezing should be asked if they are
printing through TCP/IP. If disabling TCP/IP printing solves this freezing
issue, then the problem should be fully documented and then escalated to SSE
engineering through the normal escalation channels you use. This issue has been
identified in code, but there is no delivery mechanism in place. If possible,
include a packet trace of all traffic to the printer, UNIX system, IP broadcast,
and Ethernet broadcast addresses. If possible, include files being printed that
relate to the crash.

NOTE: If the freezing is not TCP/IP related, use standard troubleshooting.

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