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LaserWriter 8.0: Using it with Third Party Printers (9/93)

Article Created: 3 September 1993

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TOPIC -----

1. I'm getting error -8993 when trying to print with the LaserWriter 8.0 driver and third party printers (such as the Digital TurboLaser, Agfa SelectSet 5000, Tectronix Phaser 2pxi or a Unix based Helios.) What does -8993 mean?
2. In some cases printing directly to the printer works. Do I need the right PPD (PostScript Printer Definition) file? I've been using a generic PPD.

DISCUSSION -----

1. Error -8993 is a time out error code generated by the driver. Here's a more detailed explanation of what happens.

Before beginning a printing job, the driver opens a separate query job to obtain information about the characteristics of the printer. A query job is also opened when the user clicks the "More Options" button in the Configuration dialog to obtain device information for the resulting Device Characteristics dialog.

The query code, when interpreted by the printer's PostScript interpreter, generates the appropriate response to the query and returns it via the standard PostScript output file. If the driver's output is being sent to a spooler rather than directly to a PostScript printer, the enclosing comments allow the spooler to recognize the query and respond accordingly.

After writing the appropriate response to the standard output file (a communication channel back to the workstation), the query's PostScript code always invokes the flush operator to flush the results back to the waiting driver. If the driver has not received a reply within an expected timeout interval (currently 30 seconds, but may change), it times out and returns an error code of -8993 to the client.

It looks like the driver times out waiting for a query result back from the DEC PATHWORKS or Helios spooler. Unless you read a packet trace of the

session, there is no way to find out if the spooler did send a query back to the driver.

2. Apple recommends contacting the third party companies directly to inquire about necessary PPD files. Last time Apple talked to DEC about this issue, they said LW 8.0 should not have any problems. PATHWORKS 1.2 will use the PPD file and it should work OK.

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Keywords: <None>

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19960215 11:05:19.00

Tech Info Library Article Number: 13128