PATHWORKS: Type and Creator for DOS Documents

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TOPIC --

This is what happened when using Apple File Exchange (v1.1.4) under System
6.0.7 to transfer an MS-DOS PowerPoint file to the Macintosh:

- INPUT Located on a VAXshare File Server (PATHWORKS 1.1 server)
  The translator uses Default file transfer, even when we choose the DOS
  PowerPoint-to-Mac option. The resulting OUTPUT file on the Macintosh is
  a TeachText file, rather than a PowerPoint file, and is completely
  unusable.

- INPUT File Transferred from the PC to the Macintosh via Floppy Disk
  If we use the same file and the same operations are executed in Apple
  File Exchange, then the application correctly uses the DOS PowerPoint-to-
  Mac translator. The resulting OUTPUT file is a Macintosh PowerPoint
  file, and PowerPoint can open it on the Macintosh.

The only difference in the two scenarios is that in the first, the file to
be translated is pulled down from a server, while in the second, the file
is located on an floppy disk in the Macintosh drive.

Is there an explanation for this behavior, and is there any known fix?

DISCUSSION ---

The Macintosh Finder uses File Creator and Type to locate and work with a
file. The file Creator helps the Finder determine what application to use
when you double-click a document. The file Type depends upon the
application, and helps the Creator determine what file format to use. A
file created by a VMS or DOS user doesn't initially have a Creator and Type
assignment.

VAXshare software assigns file Creator and Type attributes to files that
weren't created on the Macintosh computer.

The MSA$ROOT:[MSA]MSAF$FILE_TYPES.DAT file controls file creator and type
assignment. A file that doesn't have a creator and type is compared with

MSAF$FILE_TYPES.DAT entries. VAXshare software assigns the creator and
type according to the first match it encounters.

VAXshare software checks for Creator and Type whenever:

- A volume is mounted and the verification level is specified as FULL or
  PARTIAL.

- A volume is enumerated (enumeration occurs, for example, whenever a
  VAXshare file server is required to display a directory, or the Macintosh
  user opens a window).

You need to edit the MSAF$FILE_TYPES.DAT file and add a new file Creator
and Type for PowerPoint. You will find the entries in this file; follow
the format:

Format   Attr   Semantic   .Ext   Creator   Type   Trans

For your PowerPoint document, it might look like this:

*   *   *   .PPT   PPNT   SLDS   none

(You can call the .Ext of .PPT anything you want; just remember to add a
.PPT to your DOS PowerPoint document name.)

After you make changes to the MSAF$FILE_TYPES.DAT file, stop the file
server and restart it for the changes to take effect.

$ ADMIN/MSA STOP FILE_SERVER
$ ADMIN/MSA START FILE_SERVER
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