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Personal LaserWriter NTR: Sharing Options

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TOPIC -----

I understand that I can network the Personal LaserWriter NTR with Macintosh computers, and connect to a PC Windows environment through the parallel port as a one-to-one printer. But can I share the Personal LaserWriter NTR within the MS-DOS PC environment? Does it have to operate within the Windows environment? Will it work in a Novell PC network?

DISCUSSION -----

The Personal LaserWriter NTR has three different ports available for connection with computers. Of these, you can only use the mini-8 connector to share it with multiple computers. You must configure it for AppleTalk communication.

The DB-25 and parallel ports accept input from standard computer interfaces, but these have no standards for a bus or network configuration. Printer sharing boxes do exist, and will likely work with the NTR, but we haven't tested any of these. The only other way you can share the DB-25 and parallel ports is by connecting the NTR to a spooler that accepts jobs from networked computers. Novell NetWare has such a spooler.

Note: Because you can independently configure all three ports, you can always share the Personal LaserWriter NTR with at least three different computers, without using AppleTalk. You can set the mini-8 and DB-25 ports to serial, and the parallel port always accepts parallel input. With the mini-8 port configured for AppleTalk, the NTR can support an AppleTalk network of computers in addition to a serial and a parallel connection.

Using the mini-8 connector in LocalTalk mode allows any AppleTalk node to print, whether Macintosh, MS-DOS, or otherwise. The only requirement is that the client support AppleTalk PAP (Printer Access Protocol) printing. A product that provides this capability for MS-DOS is PhoneNET Talk, by Farallon Computing, Inc. Windows isn't at all necessary for this to work, but Windows applications tend to be more PostScript aware since PostScript drivers are included with Windows. This makes those applications more

likely to support the full capabilities of the NTR.

Configuring the NTR for a Novell installation varies, depending on the NetWare server. However, it will be very much the same as configuring other LaserWriter models for this task. The connection could be through any of its ports, and it can then accept input from Macintosh or PC computers that have access to the NetWare server.

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