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WordStar and LaserWriter: Page Dimension Problems

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A user has an IBM PC with LocalTalk PC Card and is running WordStar Professional 4.0. He wants to emulate an Epson printer using the LaserWriter program, without having to modify existing documents. He has run up against four problems:

- page width differences
- page length differences
- inability to print overstrikes
- lack of a ".sr" dot command

He prints through the LaserWriter program, using the WordStar option. The results are not good. Text is cropped about 3/8 inch from the right edge of page. Thus, many lines lose a few characters on right.

Second, the LaserWriter prints fewer lines per page than a dot-matrix printer (like an Epson) does. Thus, for each logical page printed, he gets one printed page full of text and a second page either blank or with a single line of text at the top of the page.

The improper cropping of text 3/8 inch from the right edge of the page (causing some characters to be "lost" off of the side of the page) may be caused by margin settings. More than likely, it is caused by switching font sizes within the document.

For example, if a 10-point Courier is chosen and Bold text is selected, the larger bold text may run off the side of the page. This is because the LaserWriter utility assumes that the 10-point Courier size is the size of ALL text within the document and will not take into account a larger text size, whether from bolding or simply using a different font size within the document.

If a line of text is typed, but due to the size of the actual printed text, it will not fit on the printed line, the rest of the characters will be cut as they print off of the right side of the page. The LaserWriter utility will position the text on the line and attempt to print it on the line in which the text appeared, regardless of whether or not the text actually fits on the line when scaled to the user's selected size. The only recourse is to limit the number of characters for those lines where the problem appears or, if the entire document is

affected, to print with smaller text sizes.

Text cropped off of the bottom of the page is due to the same reasons as cropping lines.

The LaserWriter program does not implement the WordStar "overstrike" command. This command, basically, puts a backspace in the text. Neither is the ".sr" dot command present.

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