PostScript Level 2: Change in PostScript Version and Pagetype

Article Created: 9 March 1992
Article Last Reviewed:
Article Last Updated:

TOPIC --

When we access the value of the variable "version" from the printer we get
a value of "2010.113" as the current version number. This variable has
previously given us values of "38.0" and "47.0" on LaserWriter II and
LaserWriter Plus models. Is the version really 2010.113, or is there
something different that has altered the name or location of this
information?

When accessing the PostScript variable "pagetype" we previously got values
of "0" returned, but with the LaserWriter IIg we get an "undefined"
variable. Are there many other variables that have changed, specific to
the Apple version of PostScript?

DISCUSSION ---

Yes, the version of PostScript used in the LaserWriter IIf and IIg is
2010.113. This is Adobe's current numbering convention, and will continue
for new PostScript Level 2 implementations. We've seen a number of
programs that assume the returned value won't exceed 4 characters. While
the new version numbers can cause a problem here, the real culprit is the
programmer who made an assumption about the size of data returned. The
value returned by version has never been documented to return a specific
length of data.

The pagetype operator is no longer defined in PostScript Level 2. It was a
statusdict operator in many, but not all, Level 1 implementations, and as
such wasn't guaranteed to exist on different printers. Actually, this was
true of any statusdict entry.

Level 2 uses a more comprehensive method for defining information about the
output device, and PageSize is included as one of its parameters. The
operator you'll need information on is setpagedevice, which is described
fully in the PostScript Language Reference Manual, 2nd Edition. Note that
the various setpagedevice parameters may be different on different
printers, so a program should check for the existence of specific entries

before attempting to use them. Once your code confirms it's running on a Level 2 implementation, it can obtain a list of the individual parameters for that specific printer:

```
currentpagedevice { pop == } forall flush
```

This will return the list over the communication channel. If you wish to query the current setting of a specific parameter, use code with this syntax:

```
currentpagedevice /PageSize get == flush
```

Setting PageSize, an array of two numbers, requires the setpagedevice operator to modify the parameter dictionary. The syntax can look like:

```
<< /PageSize [ 612 792 ] >> setpagedevice
```

Also, six operators are available to set up the most common page sizes. These operators are letter, lettersmall, legal, a4, a4small and b5. Their dimensions are listed on the configuration page printed by the LaserWriter Utility.

There are many other changes from PostScript Level 1 to Level 2. We strongly recommend the PostScript Language Reference Manual, 2nd Edition, by Adobe Systems and published by Addison Wesley.
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Keywords: <None>

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19960215 11:05:19.00

Tech Info Library Article Number: 10005