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AppleTalk: Problem with FastPath and Network Number Setting

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TOPIC -----

Here's a question concerning bridges and "Net" numbers. We have a 40-node AppleTalk network with six printers, an IBM 3270 gateway (Netway 1000), and a Kinetics FastPath 4.

When the FastPath is up, everyone's "Net" number (according to Inter-Poll) is 92 (in the AppleTalk zone). The Zone name is "applek". When the Kinetics is brought down, the devices that were on "Net = 92" are still set to 92. The Zone name goes away. If we turn on something new, it gets a Net of 0 and no Zone name, as one would expect. So, with the FastPath down, we have no Zone name, but everyone who has started up since the FastPath went down has a Net number of 0, and everyone who was running when the FastPath went down has a Net number of 92. When someone with a Net number 0 tries to print to a LaserWriter with a Net number of 92, a message is received that states that it can't find the LaserWriter.

So far, the only solution we have found is to restart all of the machines that have a Net number greater than 0. This is not acceptable. For the gateway, this involves bringing down the line, recycling the box, reloading it, and bringing up the mainframe line.

Because the Kinetics can send a broadcast to say that there is a bridge and that everyone should join Net number "x" when the bridge goes down, how can we reset the Net number to 0 without shutting all of the machines off? Is there a utility that would accomplish the task?

DISCUSSION -----

Apple Tech Comm knows of no way around this problem. Without a router, like the FastPath, operating on the network, there is no provision for getting (or setting) a network number on a machine. We are not aware of a utility that addresses this issue, and writing one would not be a trivial task.

If this is a recurring problem, the first issue that should be addressed is the FastPath going down so regularly. This should not be happening. When it does, bringing the FastPath up again would resolve the issue.

To address the window of time when the FastPath is down, you might consider setting the network number in the FastPath's configuration to zero. Although this will work for only one local network on an Internet, it would resolve the issue until the FastPath could be made to operate reliably.

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