



Tech Info Library

Apple LaserWriter: Printing From UNIX (1/96)

Revised: 1/4/96
Security: Everyone

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Article Created: 8 December 1995
Article Reviewed/Updated: 4 January 1996

TOPIC -----

This article provides guidelines for printing from a UNIX workstation to an Apple LaserWriter printer over a serial connection.

DISCUSSION -----

Step 1: Create PostScript Files

If the applications you are using do not generate PostScript files, or if you want to print plain text files, you need a tool to translate plain text into PostScript. TranScript is one such application from Adobe Systems, Inc., which does this. The TranScript software converts non-PostScript language files such as Tek 4014, Diablo 630, troff, ntroff, plot and ASCII into PostScript language files. TransScript is distributed by the Qualix Group.

Step 2: Create a Printer Description

Once you have text to PostScript software installed, set up an entry in the /etc/printcap file for the PostScript printer. Sample printcap entries can be found on the internet. One anonymous ftp site is "ftp.unt.edu" which contains the file printcap-city located in the /pub/unix directory. The entry should look similar to:

Begin_Table

```
#LASERWRITER PLUS (GENERIC) -----
lp|lw|ps|PostScript|LaserWriter|laserwriter|postscript|Apple:\
    :lp=/dev/lw:br#9600:\
    :fc#0000374:fs#0000003:xc#0:xs#0040040:rw:\
    :if=/usr/lib/psif:of=/usr/doctools/lib/psf:\
    :gf=/usr/lib/psgf:nf=/usr/doctools/lib/psnf:\
    :tf=/usr/lib/pstf:\
```

```
:vf=/usr/lib/psvf:\n:sd=/usr/spool/lpd0:lf=/usr/spool/lpd0/log:\n:mx#0:sf:sb:
```

End_Table

Step 3: Make Connection

Connect the printer to the workstation. Adjust printer and port communications settings appropriately.

Step 4: Check the Connection

- Send data to the printer using the commands your UNIX workstation requires. Here is a generic example, you may need to use a different command. This command does not print anything, it only checks the connection.

```
echo "Hello" > /dev/port &
```

After sending the command you should see the lights on the printer flash as the data is received. If you do not see the lights flash, there may a problem with the physical connection. You should check the cable, UNIX system serial port setup, or LaserWriter setup.

Step 5: Printing a PostScript File

- The final step is to print a PostScript file. If you have a PostScript file available, you should be able to print it with the following command:

```
cat filename > /dev/port &
```

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The Tech Info Library article titled "Locating Vendor Information" can help you search for a particular vendor's address and phone number.

Article Change History:

04 Jan 1996 - Made changes for clarity.

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Tech Info Library Article Number:19043