

Tech Info Library

TITLE

Remote Access: Modem Not Responding Alert

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TOPIC

When Remote Access is not receiving correct responses from the modem (usually, no response at all), the connection attempt will fail with an alert.

Use this troubleshooting path to help identify the source of the failure.

DISCUSSION

Where Open Transport/PPP is installed, substitute "PPP control panel" for "Remote Access control panel" throughout.

1. Reset the modem and check its connections

- a. External modems: Press the modem's reset button if available, or disconnect its power for least 15 seconds. If the modem does not use a separate power cable, it draws power from its connection to the computer. Internal modems: Shut down the computer for at least 15 seconds.
- b. "Check its connections" in the alert refers to the modem's connection to the computer, not the telephone outlet. This is not easily checked for internal modems, but for external modems, check the modem and power cables for secure connections and signs of damage. This is especially important if the symptom is intermittent or can be caused by moving the modem or its cables. If the modem normally provides any visual signs of power, such as illuminated LED's, check for them.

2. Configure the Modem control panel

Configure the Modem control panel to use the modem script appropriate for the modem. Apple-branded internal modems use these scripts, by computer:

- **Power Macintosh G3 (Blue & White):** PowerMac G3 Internal 56K, PowerMac G3 Int56K (v.34 Only)
- **PowerBook G3 Series:** PowerBook G3 Internal 56K, PowerBook G3 Int56K (v.34 Only)
- **iMac:** iMac Internal 56K, iMac Internal 56k (v.34 Only)
- **Power Macintosh G3 & Power Macintosh 6500:** Apple/GV 56K
- **PowerBook 3400 & PowerBook G3:** PowerBook 3400/G3 Internal 33.6
- **Geoport Telecom Adapter (internal or external):** Geoport/Express Modem

3. Configure the Remote Access control panel and test

- a. Open the Remote Access control panel. Enter any name (user ID), password, and telephone number
- b. Click Connect. If the symptom persists, continue to the next step.

4. Configure the Extensions Manager control panel for Mac OS All

- a. Open the Extensions Manager control panel and select whichever Mac OS All set is available from the Selected Set menu. For example: Mac OS 8.6 All, iMac All, and so on.
- b. If the modem requires any of its own extensions (excluding fax or telephony extensions), ensure they are installed and enabled. Enabled extensions show an "x" in the adjacent checkbox. Extensions Manager will ask to duplicate the Mac OS All set before additional extensions can be enabled. Allow it to do so.

Of the modems that shipped with Apple computers, the following require the extensions listed in order to respond:

- **Apple 56K modem (but not Apple/GV 56K modem):** iMac Modem Extension, PowerMac G3 Modem, or PowerBook G3 Series

Modem, depending upon the computer

- **Geoport Telecom Adapter:** Apple Telecom Modem, Express Modem Tool, Geoport for Power Macintosh, Geoport Telecom Adapter, Geoport Serial Driver, Serial Extension (PM 6100/7100/8100 only), Shared Library Manager, Shared Library Manager PPC, and the Express Modem control panel

- **PowerBook 3400/G3 Internal Modem/Ethernet 33.6 card:** PowerBook 3400 Ethernet extension and PowerBook 3400 Modem extension, or just the PowerBook 3400/G3 Modem extension

c. Close Extensions Manager and restart the computer. Any extensions that may have captured the modem port for their own use are disabled and will remain so until re-enabled in Extensions Manager.

d. After restarting, open the Remote Access control panel and click Connect. If the symptom does not recur, perform extensions troubleshooting to isolate the extensions responsible for the issue. It may only be necessary to correctly configure the software that used them.

5. Reset Parameter RAM

a. Select Restart from the Special menu, then immediately press Option-Command-P-R (four keyboard keys, all pressed together), keeping them pressed until the computer chimes or restarts twice. It will not work if the Caps Lock key is depressed, and may not work with non-Apple keyboards.

b. Open the Remote Access control panel and click Connect. If the symptom does not recur, it indicates that there was a conflicting setting in Parameter RAM, probably created by one or more of the disabled extensions, either because it was involved in a system crash, is in conflict with other extensions or with the Mac OS, or was not configured correctly. Perform extensions troubleshooting, but the fault may not immediately or ever return, even after re-enabling the extensions.

6. Trash preferences

Damaged Remote Access preferences may be at fault. This is unlikely given the symptom, but easy enough to confirm prior to the more time-consuming tasks ahead.

a. Move these preference files to the desktop:

- System Folder : Preferences : **Modem Preferences**

- System Folder : Preferences : Remote Access : **Remote Access Connections**

Open Transport/PPP users:

- System Folder : Preferences : **Modem Preferences**

- System Folder : Preferences : **PPP Preferences**

b. Repeat steps 2 & 3 to reconfigure the control panels and test. If the symptom persists, the preferences were not at fault. If you wish to reclaim the configuration information they contained, move them back to their original locations and allow them to replace the newer preference files.

7. Reinstall the modem software, if applicable

Many modems today don't require specific software in order to function for a data connection. Where such software is needed, it is usually for faxing or telephony (using the modem for voice calls). Rarely, a modem might require an extension to enable data compression and error correction (as with some Global Village Teleport Bronze modems, for example). But for this symptom, we're only concerned with software that is required to enable even the barest functionality.

a. If the modem requires such software and the modem never worked reliably, either with this computer or the version of Mac OS in use, check with the manufacturer for a compatible version. Users of Geoport Telecom Adapters, for example, commonly install older, incompatible versions of Apple Telecom that either came with the adapter or with the previous version of Mac OS that was installed.

b. If the modem requires such software and the modem was working successfully before, the software may be damaged. Reinstall the modem software. For Apple modems, this is more likely to affect Geoport Telecom Adapters, for which the software required is abundant. For other Apple modems, continue to the next step.

8. Perform a Clean Install or Clean Restore

The Mac OS may be damaged.

a. Perform a clean install or clean restore of the operating system. If there is any connectivity or modem software to be installed separately, do so immediately afterward.

b. Repeat steps 2 and 3 to retest. If the issue still exists, there is likely a hardware problem requiring service. If you are using an external modem, the problem may be further isolated between the computer and modem by testing the modem on another computer, or confirming that other devices will work on the modem port of this computer.

In many modem troubleshooting calls the customer has only one phone line, and you (the support person) are talking with the customer on that line. So how can you troubleshoot when the line is in use? Here's how:

A "modem not responding" error occurs **before** the modem dials. If the issue is resolved, you will hear the modem attempt to take over the line, then the customer will get a "no dial tone" error. If the issue persists, the "modem not responding" error will persist.

No need to hang up so the customer can try a fix, then get a callback from the customer, then hang up again so the customer can try something else, and so on.

Document Information

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