LocalTalk PC Card: Where To Get Interface Specifications

Revised: 6/21/91
Security: Everyone

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Article Created: March 9, 1991
Article Reviewed Only:
Article Last Updated:

TOPIC ----------

I want to develop a server program on a PC. To do this, I suppose I'll need to get the hardware and software interface specifications for the LocalTalk PC card. Where can I get them?

DISCUSSION ----------

You may not need to get down to the hardware level. You may be better off basing your software on an existing model, such as the Open Data-Link Interface (ODI) specification. This way, you wouldn't have to adjust for each type of network card, but could work with a single model. Also, you'll save much development time by using ODI-compliant drivers already in use for many network cards. Your software could then coexist with other software that uses ODI protocol stacks--AppleShare PC, for example.

Since an ODI-based driver already exists for the LocalTalk PC Card, you could concentrate on developing your server software and basing it on the available AppleTalk protocol stack. If you want to implement a different protocol stack for the LocalTalk PC card, this also can be done within the framework of ODI, and it would still take advantage of the existing driver.

The best source of information on programming to the ODI specification is the Open Data-Link Interface Developer's Guide, available from APDA. Here is the introduction to Chapter 1:

"The Open Data-Link Interface is a new system jointly developed by Apple Computer, Inc., and Novell, Inc., that provides unmatched flexibility for both network developers and end users. The Open Data-Link Interface (ODI) includes the Multiple Link Interface (MLI) and the Multiple Protocol

Interface (MPI). The MLI and MPI are the interfaces for network card drivers and protocol stacks to the Link Support Layer (LSL). The LSL provides packet transfer between these interfaces in a way that allows different protocol stacks to use link-level drivers interchangeably and simultaneously. The ODI puts an end to the need for one-driver to one-stack communication."

The entire publication includes the Developer's Guide, some sample driver notes, and a disk with code and test programs. It is available from APDA as part number M0355LL/A.

For more information, search on "APDA"

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