Tech Info Library

AppleSoft BASIC: Network Problems And Solutions

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This article discusses four problem areas concerning AppleSoft BASIC and
networks:

- Problems due to an incorrect file name.

- Problems caused by interrupts

- Problems with printer timeouts

- Problems with "LIST" and similar commands.

Incorrect File Names

Occasionally, there are reports of difficulties printing or saving files
using "BASIC.System" from within Aristotle. Problems can appear because of
an incorrect file name. Note that the distribution disks do not contain a
file with the name "BASIC.System". Rather, they show a file with the name
"BASIC.SYSTEM". If "BASIC.System" is being called, and only "BASIC.SYSTEM"
is available, a message stating that the file cannot be found is the
response. If both the Aristotle designation and the filename are the same,
there is no conflict.

Interrupt Problems

The only known problem when using Applesoft BASIC over the network concerns
turning off interrupts from BASIC. If the BASIC program turns off the
computer's interrupts, network difficulties occur. Interrupts are used by
the network to prioritize communication with workstations. Should these
interrupts be disabled, the network could "hang", because communication
with the workstation is not possible.

Printer Timeout

If you issue the "PR#7" command, printed within 30 seconds, and issued "PR#0", then everything works fine. However, if you type "PR#7" and do not close after printing with a "PR#0", there's a problem. After about 2 minutes, when you try to print again, nothing happens. The printer times out. You must close the printer connection for everything to function correctly.

"LIST" And Other Printer Commands

Another printer issue has to do with the "LIST" command. For example, if, while trying to print a BASIC listing, you type "PR#7" and immediately type "LIST", you won't get a printout of the listing. The reason for this failure relates to how quickly you type "LIST". After you type "PR#7", it takes 3 to 5 seconds for the workstation and the networked printer to establish communication. If you type "LIST" before this communication link is completed, the command will not be recognized as input. As a result, the printout shows only two Applesoft prompts (the right bracket,"]").

To be assured that the computer accepts the "LIST" command (or any immediate command that causes printing), wait until the cursor returns to the screen after typing "PR#7", before entering the next command. This way, you know the network has "digested" the command. After finishing the print job, remember to close the printing session by typing "PR#0".

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