Tech Info Library

LaserWriter: Sharing a Hard Drive with a Macintosh (5/93)

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TOPIC ---

I've used the LaserWriter utility software to format an Apple hard drive to
store fonts for a LaserWriter. If I decide to use the same drive with a
Macintosh, will the computer recognize the drive, or must I reinitialize
the drive first?   In other words, does the LaserWriter utility format the
hard drive in a different way than the Macintosh does?

If the formatting is different, will formatting the drive for the Macintosh
(instead of using the LaserWriter Utility) allow the hard drive to be
attached to a LaserWriter (such that the LaserWriter recognizes it for
storing fonts)?

Which LaserWriter, and which version of LaserWriter Utility, will allow a
hard drive to be recognized by both a Macintosh computer and a LaserWriter?
Can the same results be expected if a third-party hard drive is used
(providing the hard drive functions on the Macintosh and/or the
LaserWriter?

DISCUSSION --

The answer depends on which LaserWriter you're using.

LaserWriter NTX

The LaserWriter NTX uses the LaserWriter Font Utility to initialize drives
and download fonts. This utility formats the disk(s) as one logical disk
device for the PostScript file system. Because the LaserWriter NTX regards
all attached hard disks as a single logical unit, these drives are not
recognized by the Macintosh file system.

LaserWriter IIf and IIg, LaserWriter Pro Series

Beginning with the LaserWriter IIf and IIg, LaserWriter Utility (version
7.1 and later) took over the task of downloading the fonts and initializing
the drives. With this utility, the drive is Macintosh (HFS) compatible and
supports the PostScript file system. The file system supported by the
LaserWriter IIf and IIg, and the LaserWriter Pro series, is described in
sections 3.8.2 and 3.8.3 of the PostScript Language Reference Manual
(second edition), with the following restrictions:

• Filenames cannot begin or end with a slash, or contain adjacent slashes
  (//).

• Filenames may not contain the colon character (:).

• There may not be more than 31 non-slash characters between two slash
  characters, and the total number of characters in the filename may not
  exceed 255.

• Because the printer uses SCSI ID 6, it is not possible to use a disk
  drive whose SCSI ID is also 6.

While formatting the drive, the LaserWriter Utility does some additional
functions. It names the drive "disk#" (where # is the drive's SCSI ID) and
it creates a folder, at the root level, named "fonts". Although it is
possible to manually do these functions from the Macintosh, it is much
simpler and cleaner to let the Utility do the work.

Downloading fonts should be done only through the LaserWriter Utility. So
that the fonts are recognized on the PostScript file system, the utility:

• Removes the fonts from their suitcases and places them in the "fonts"
  folder.

• Changes the file type and creator.

• Renames the fonts (for example, "Courier (bold)" is renamed "Courier-
  Bold").

Non-Apple Drives

If you are considering connecting non-Apple hard disks to your LaserWriter,
keep these points in mind:

• The LaserWriter must be able to tell how much space is available on the
  disk. This is not possible with some hard disks from manufacturers other
  than Apple.

• Some non-Apple disks have internal SCSI terminators. Since the
  LaserWriter has an internal terminator, put any disk with an internal
  terminator at the other end of the chain, and do not use an external
  terminator. There should be no more than two terminators in any SCSI
  chain.

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