



Tech Info Library

PostScript Fonts: Momentary Freeze copying to Server (7/96)

Revised: 7/12/96
Security: Everyone

PostScript Fonts: Momentary "Freeze" copying to Server (7/96)

=====
Article Created: 27 November 1995
Article Reviewed/Updated: 12 July 1996

TOPIC -----

The article discusses an issue with copying numerous PostScript fonts to a file server. When doing this, the file server appears to "freeze" momentarily. However, after a few seconds it works properly.

DISCUSSION -----

The appearance of the file server "freezing" during large PostScript font transfers is caused by Adobe PostScript fonts having a BNDL bit. When a file, whose info bits indicates an icon bundle is present, is copied to a server, the Finder adds this information to the Desktop database. Things that can make this worse are when the Desktop file grows so that the file becomes fragmented on disk, increasing the disk access time to process the file. Rebuilding the Desktop may reduce the size of the desktop database files, but it may still leave the file fragmented. Having a large amount of free space on the disk may help the possibility that the desktop files get a contiguous amount of disk space.

There is not hard and fast rules as to how many PostScript fonts can be copied without experiencing this momentary "freeze". However, some servers may be more prone to this if they have a large hard disk, which allows more files to be stored on them, which leads to a larger desktop file. A hard disk that is nearing capacity, can have a fragmented desktop file, which can increase the time it takes to update the desktop file.

Compressing PostScript fonts with third-party utilities, transferring them to the server, and then decompressing them should speed up the copy across the network. However, this may actually take longer since the files must be decompressed once the file is copied to the server. Also while the files are being restored to their original state, the Finder on the server is placing the icons into the desktop databases.

Third-party copy utilities such as Disktop, CopyDoubler, Desktop Speedboost, or Copyright Pro, which offload the copy operation from the Finder to another task, could potentially decrease the wait, but eventually the Finder on the target server machine has to update the desktop database, so you should not expect much of an improvement, if any, with these utilities.

Since this is the way the Mac OS works, Apple is not doing anything to address this momentary wait. The same phenomenon happens when you drag a number of application files to a server. This would happen to any large number of files that are copied to a file server, which contain BNDL information. The problem may be seen more often with PostScript fonts since these are the type of files typically copied by dragging a large number to a file server.

One other option, which Apple Computer, Inc. does not endorse, is to turn off the bundle bit in the font, to do this you can use ResEdit, or in A/UX you could use setfile.

One thing to remember is that this momentary wait is only experienced once, when the fonts are copied to the server. Compressing the fonts prior to copying them to the file server should speed up the copy process to server since there is less data to copy, and no font icon to update. However, also remember that expanding the PostScript fonts back into their original format after copying them, takes some additional time.

Article Change History:

12 Jul 1996 - Added BNDL bit solution.

Copyright 1995-96, Apple Computer, Inc.

Tech Info Library Article Number:18977