Open Transport 1.1: AppleTalk Features Q & A (3/96)

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TOPIC --------------------

This article is the Reference Q & A (questions and answers) on AppleTalk features for Open Transport 1.1.

DISCUSSION --------------------

Question: What are some of the upgraded features of Open Transport AppleTalk?

Answer: Open Transport/AppleTalk now includes new support for assigned (manually administered) protocol addresses. This allows AppleTalk nodes to be managed using protocol address as a unique identifier. It also may reduce the network traffic associated with AppleTalk's dynamic address assignment features (AARP).

Dynamic addressing continues to be available for those customers who prefer automated address allocation.

Question: AppleTalk preferences, such as the last used protocol address and the selected network interface, have been stored in persistent parameter RAM in the past. How does this relate to the new Open Transport network configurations and manual addressing?

Answer: Under the classic AppleTalk networking architecture, AppleTalk's ON/OFF state, the selected network interface, the previous network (protocol) address, and the previous AppleTalk zone name were saved in persistent memory (parameter RAM) for reuse at boot time. To ensure backwards compatibility, this information is still stored and retrieved on systems using Open Transport/AppleTalk.

However, there are some changes made with Open Transport to accommodate the expanded capabilities of multiple, saved configuration files, and required network settings.

• At boot time, Open Transport reads the current Open Transport/AppleTalk configuration file to determine if AppleTalk should be set to ON or OFF. This value will override the value saved in parameter RAM.

• If the network interface specified in the current AppleTalk configuration file is locked (that is, it is a required setting) and the specified port is not available or cannot be initialized, AppleTalk will not automatically switch to LocalTalk; instead AppleTalk will remain OFF. The user will receive notification in the event this occurs.

Question: What happened to the "Network" control panel?

Answer: The Network Control Panel has been replaced by the Open Transport/AppleTalk configuration utility (control panel). This change was made to reflect the function of the utility - to configure AppleTalk network connections.

Question: Are there other changes to the human interface for AppleTalk?

Answer: Yes. The AppleTalk configuration utility now provides basic troubleshooting information. For example, the Advanced and Administrator views provide access to the hardware (Media Access Control) address, current AppleTalk router address and the current AppleTalk network number range for the cable. Previously this information was only available through the use of router administration or protocol analysis software.

Question: Are there other changes to AppleTalk of interest?

Answer: Yes. Beginning with Open Transport/AppleTalk v1.1, AppleTalk now includes integrated support for both multinode and multihomed operation, accessible to developers at the API level. Configuration and use of the second, third, or more network interfaces or protocol addresses requires application program support.

Multihoming is the term applied to the capability to communicate using more than one network interface at a time using the same protocol. This term is taken from the idea that the workstation makes a "home" on more than one network at the same time.

Multinode is the term applied to the capability to communicate through more than one network protocol address at the same time on a given network interface, using a single protocol. This term is taken from the idea that the workstation or PC appears to outside parties to be multiple end-nodes on the network.

Question: Earlier information about Open Transport said that AppleTalk could be dynamically loaded and unloaded only as needed, similar to Open Transport/TCP. Is this feature available?

Answer: This capability has been removed from Open Transport at this time. It

was not technically feasible to provide this feature without creating compatibility problems with existing applications.

Question: Is Open Transport/AppleTalk "AppleTalk Phase 3"?

Answer: No. Open Transport/AppleTalk is a new, modern implementation of the AppleTalk Phase 2 protocol architecture for Mac OS - from the people who invented AppleTalk.

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