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LaserWriter: Improving the Speed of a Shared LaserWriter

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TOPIC -----

I have a 15-node TOPS network with a shared LaserWriter IINT. I'm not happy with the printing speed across the network and I'm considering upgrading to a LaserWriter IINTX. Most of the documents we print are 1 to 4 pages with only 3 to 4 fonts. Is the bottleneck the LocalTalk speed, or could a LaserWriter IINTX significantly improve printing speed? Can you tell me how a LaserWriter IINTX could increase speed, and how much improvement to expect?

DISCUSSION -----

Upgrading to a LaserWriter IINTX will definitely help performance some, but it's important to consider other factors that may also help. The principal items that affect printing to a PostScript LaserWriter with a given application (not necessarily in this order) are:

- The LaserWriter's CPU performance.
- The type of print job: complex graphics or text.
- Whether the required fonts are resident in the printer or need to be downloaded.
- The type of connection to the host: serial or LocalTalk.
- The host's performance: how fast it can prepare and send data.

The environment may also play a major role in printing performance. Connection to a LocalTalk network adversely affects the performance of many LaserWriters if that network is used for file services such as an AppleShare File Server or TOPS installation. The LocalTalk bandwidth can be used up, resulting in poor network and printing performance.

From what you've told us about your installation, it doesn't sound like upgrading to a LaserWriter IINTX will help much. You may see a mild improvement in print speeds, but unless you print complex graphics as well

as text, you won't see a dramatic change.

The type of Macintosh, the system software versions, and the applications you use can affect speed quite a bit.

Printing slows down if you repeatedly use fonts (TrueType or PostScript) that must be downloaded. If this is the case, we recommend that you make a habit of downloading the most frequently used fonts to the LaserWriter with the LaserWriter Font Utility. Downloading fonts once between power cycles instead of for each print job improves speed on both the LaserWriter IINT and IINTX.

The LaserWriter IINTX does have the advantage of optional memory upgrades for additional fonts and performance. A hard disk is also available for the LaserWriter IINTX to download fonts only once.
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