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LaserWriter Pro 810: Speeding Up Ethernet Performance (8/94)

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TOPIC -----

I have a LaserWriter Pro 810 and I have noticed that when I print to it using the Ethernet port it takes a long time to print. How can I speed up the printing process using the Ethernet port.

DISCUSSION -----

Macintosh AppleTalk print jobs sent to the LaserWriterPro 810's Ethernet port can take up to 50% longer than printing to the LocalTalk port on the printer. This "slowness" varies with the type of document being printed as well as the number of pages, and is most noticeable printing the first page of a multi-page document, or merely a one page document.

This problem is due to Ethernet data having to propagate through the printer's unidirectional parallel port architecture to get to the PostScript interpreter. For reverse communications (data from the PostScript interpreter to the client), additional processing is required to parse the data and then funnel the information back using the serial port. The serial port is used as the communications "backchannel" since the printer's parallel port is unidirectional.

We recommend using LocalTalk if possible when speed and/or performance is required. To use LocalTalk, you would place the LaserWriter Pro 810 on a LocalTalk network segment, while the workstations may remain on Ethernet. In this case, you need to use an AppleTalk router to connect the LocalTalk and Ethernet networks. Ethernet must be used when alternate protocols, such as IPX, TCP/IP, and LAT are paramount. If you need alternate protocols, then the LocalTalk solution is not an option.

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