LaserWriter 2.0 ROM: Changes to Font Cache

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Operation of the font cache has changed somewhat. Formerly there was a single limit on the number of bytes occupied by a character in the cache; a character larger than that would not be cached. Now there are two cache thresholds, upper and lower. If a character is larger than the upper threshold (as determined by the bounding box specified to 'setcachedevice'), it will not be cached, otherwise it will be. If a character is cached and is larger than the lower threshold, it will be compressed, otherwise it will be stored as a full pixel array.

The two thresholds are manipulated by the new operators 'setcacheparms' and 'currentcacheparms', described below. The old operators, principally 'cachestatus' and 'setcachelimit', remain valid. PostScript programs rarely deal with these operators.

Although they consume much less space in the font cache than full pixel arrays (by a factor of up to 40), compressed characters require more computation to reconstitute when they are needed. Reconstituting a compressed character is still substantially faster than re-executing the original character description. In systems printing at 300 pixels per inch or less (including the LaserWriter), the default lower threshold is set so that characters up to about

20 points are stored as full pixel arrays while larger ones are stored in compressed form. Caching of regular-sized body text occurs with the full pixel array representation which is time-efficient while caching of large characters occurs with the compressed representation which is space-efficient.
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