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Technical Note TE03

Where Have My Font Icons Gone?

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This Technical Note discusses why you should not link directly from your font files to the font icons provided by LaserWriter driver 5.2 and later.

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Introduction

This Technical Note discusses why you should not directly link your font files to the font icons provided by the LaserWriter driver 5.2, and what you can do to still use these font icons. This Note applies only to PostScript downloadable font files for use with PostScript printers, not font files which have been created by the Font/DA Mover.

In the past, it was possible to directly link your PostScript downloadable font files to the font icons provided by the LaserWriter driver. This is no longer possible, because the 'FREF' and 'ICN#' resources do not match in LaserWriter driver 5.2 and later.

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Oh, But Why Change Things Now?

Apple engineering decided that they did not want developers using the font icons directly from the driver, they wanted the option to change them in the future. Due to time constraints, the original font icons were not removed from the LaserWriter driver 5.2, but the 'FREF' and 'ICN#' IDs were changed, thereby preventing developers from linking directly to the icons. Engineering has removed the font icons from LaserWriter driver 6.0 and later.

If you want to use Apple's font icons from LaserWriter driver v5.2, you should copy them into the resource fork of your font file. Apple expects all developers to bundle their own icons with their font file.

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What Do I Need To Do?

You need to do the same things you did, when you bundled your icon to your application. Although your font file is just a document, if you want your "custom icon" to appear when your application is not present, the font file needs to contain the following resources: 'BNDL', 'FREF', and 'ICN#'. *Inside Macintosh*, Volume III, The Finder Interface and Technical Note #48, Bundles, explain the details of bundling icons with your font files.

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So, How Do I Do This From Within An Application?

To enable your application to add icons to the font file when it is created, you need to install a copy of the 'BNDL', 'FREF', and 'ICN#' resources (used by the font file to bundle its icon to the file), into the resource fork of the application. Make sure that they do not conflict with the same resources used by the application to bundle its icon(s).

When creating a "new" font file, copy the 'BNDL', 'FREF', and 'ICN#' resources from the resource fork of the application, into the resource fork of the font file. You will also need to set the bundle bit of the font file, otherwise Finder will not realize that the file contains an icon. The font file will now be able to show its icons, whether the application is present or not.

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Conclusion

With LaserWriter driver v5.2 and later, the 'FREF' and 'ICN#' resources do not match, therefore you will need to bundle your custom font file icon within its resource fork. If you provide the 'BNDL', 'FREF', and 'ICN#' resources in the resource fork of your font file, Finder will display your custom icon for the font file, whether the application is present or not.

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References

Inside Macintosh, Volume III, The Finder Interface

[Technical Note M.TB.Bundles, Bundles](#)

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