Adobe℠ Customer Services

Troubleshooting PostScript™ Printer Problems and Improving Printer Performance

This technical note offers solutions to problems printing Portable Document Format (PDF) files from Windows versions of Acrobat Exchange and Acrobat Reader, and also gives advice for improving your printer's performance with all applications.

THE PRINTER IS NOT WORKING AT ALL

Problem
You have installed the Adobe Acrobat software and can open and view PDF files, but cannot print. A number of problems can cause your printer to fail to print:

• The printer is not switched on

• The printer is not connected to your computer correctly

• The printer is not selected with the Printers dialog box (displayed from the Control Panel)

• For printers connected with a serial communications port, the printer setup does not match the Windows port setup. (For example, your printer is set up to operate at 1200 Baud and the Windows Port Baud Rate is set to 9600 Baud.)

• The printer driver settings do not match your printer's setup

• The printer is broken

Solution
Check for these problems in order, working down the list from top to bottom. Make sure the printer is switched on and the cable connecting the printer to the computer is securely fastened at both ends. Then carefully check the printer driver settings to make sure they match your printer's setup.

If you still have problems, carefully repeat the installation instructions in your printer documentation.

YOU CANNOT PRINT TO A NETWORK PRINTER

Problem
You try to print a document to a network printer but the document fails to print. Four problems can cause this failure:

- Your network is failing; nobody can print

- The printer is not switched on

- The printer is not connected to the network correctly

- Your Windows network setup is incorrect

Solution
Contact your network administrator for help solving these problems.

ACROBAT DOCUMENTS FAIL TO PRINT ON AN APPLE PERSONAL LASERWRITER NT PRINTER

Problem
You cannot print Acrobat documents on a Personal LaserWriter NT printer.

Solution
Upgrade your printer to a Personal LaserWriter NTR. The version of the PostScript language interpreter installed in the Personal LaserWriter NT cannot print the multiple master fonts used by the Acrobat Exchange and Reader programs to substitute for fonts not installed on your system. Contact your Apple dealer for Personal LaserWriter upgrade information.

ACROBAT DOCUMENTS FAIL TO PRINT ON A POSTSCRIPT PRINTER

Problem
You try to print a document but the printer stops printing before the entire document has printed. The following problems can cause your printer to stop printing:

- The Print Manager requires more memory or disk space than is available

- Your printer requires more memory to print a complicated page than is available

Solution
If you suspect the problem is with the Print Manager, see "Correcting a Printing Problem Caused by the Print Manager" later in this document. If the problem is that a page of the document requires more printer memory to print than is installed in the printer, either purchase more memory for your printer or reduce the amount of printer memory required to print the document. The best solution is to purchase more printer memory. Have at least 4 megabytes (MB) of printer memory to print Acrobat documents. To reduce the amount of memory required to print an Acrobat document, see "Changing the Acrobat Exchange or Reader Substitution Fonts Option" later in this document.

CHANGING THE ACROBAT EXCHANGE OR READER SUBSTITUTION FONTS OPTION

When an Acrobat document contains fonts that are not installed on your system, the Acrobat Exchange or Reader program substitutes one of two multiple master fonts for the missing font. By default, the Exchange or Reader program uses the AdobeSerifMM multiple master font for missing serif fonts, and the AdobeSansXMM multiple master font for missing sans serif fonts. If PDF documents fail to print because of insufficient printer memory, reduce the amount of printer memory required to print PDF documents by selecting either Sans Only or Serif Only as the Substitution Fonts option in the Preferences dialog box. Sans Only tells the Exchange or Reader program to use AdobeSansXMM for missing sans serif and serif fonts. Serif Only tells the Exchange or Reader program to use AdobeSerifMM for missing sans serif and serif fonts.

AdobeSansXMM uses less printer memory than AdobeSerifMM, but AdobeSerifMM is a better substitute for very thin, bold, narrow, or extended fonts.

To change the Acrobat Exchange or Reader program Substitution Fonts option:

1 Start the Acrobat Exchange or Reader program.

2 Choose Preferences from the Edit menu. The Preferences dialog box appears.

3 Select either Sans Only or Serif Only from the Substitution Fonts drop-down list.

4 Click OK. The Preferences dialog box closes.

5 Quit the Acrobat Exchange or Reader program and restart Windows for the change to take effect.

CORRECTING A PRINTING PROBLEM CAUSED BY THE PRINT MANAGER

If you suspect the problem is with the Print Manager, switch off the Print Manager (from the Printers dialog box) and try printing again. If the document prints with the Print Manager switched off, you know that the Print Manager failed to print the document because it ran out of either disk space or memory. Create more disk space for the Print Manager by deleting unused files, or purchase an additional disk drive. Make more memory available by reducing the number of applications you run at the same time or by purchasing additional memory. If you use the Adobe Printer Driver, reduce the amount of memory required to print your documents by selecting the Optimize for Portability option in the PostScript Options dialog box.

PRINTED IMAGES (BITMAPS) HAVE A QUILTED, BLOCKY LOOK

Problem

Printed scanned photographic images or images created with a paint program appear quilted and blocky.

Solution

There is no solution to this problem. Photographic images can require a great deal of storage. To minimize the size of Acrobat documents, people who create the documents can choose to compress images. Compressing images reduces the file size of Acrobat documents but gives the images a quilted, blocky look.

IMPROVING PRINTER PERFORMANCE

Make your printer print faster by taking any of the following steps:

• Purchase more printer memory. Have at least 4 megabytes (MB) of printer memory to print Acrobat documents.

• Purchase and install the fonts commonly used in the PDF documents that you view and print. If the fonts used in a PDF document are available on your system, the Acrobat Exchange or Reader program does not have to create and print substitute fonts.

• Manually download frequently used fonts to your printer. Fonts that are manually downloaded to your printer remain in printer memory between print jobs, and do not have to be downloaded to the printer each time they are used. Registered Acrobat users can obtain a PostScript font downloader from Adobe Systems free of charge.

• Deselect the Unlimited Downloadable Fonts in a Document option in the Page Setup Options dialog box. To change the Page Setup for a document, open the document, and choose Page Setup from the File menu. To change the Unlimited Downloadable Fonts in a Document option, click Options to display the Page Setup Options dialog box.

• Increase the size of the Adobe Type Manager™ (ATM) font cache. See "To Increase the Size of the ATM Font Cache" later in this document for instructions.

• Connect your printer to a parallel port on your computer.

• Install and use the Adobe Printer Driver, available from Adobe Systems.

• If your printer supports PostScript Level 2, make sure your printer driver is set up to use PostScript Level 2. See on-line help for the Adobe Printer Driver for instructions.

• If your printer supports binary communication, make sure both your printer and your printer driver are set up to use binary communication. See on-line help for the Adobe Printer Driver for instructions.

• Select the Adobe Printer Driver "Optimize for Speed" option. See online help for the Adobe Printer Driver for instructions.

To increase the size of the ATM font cache:

1 Start Windows (or quit all applications).

2 Double-click the ATM program icon. (The ATM program icon is usually in the Main program group.) The ATM control panel appears.

3 Click the up arrow in the Font Cache box to increase the amount of memory used for the ATM font cache. Add 64K for every Type 1 font that you use frequently. If your computer has more that 4 megabytes (MB) of memory and you use the Acrobat Exchange or Reader program frequently, Adobe recommends that you specify 1024K (1 MB) for the ATM font cache.

4 Click Exit to close the ATM control panel. A message appears prompting you to either restart Windows or return to the current Windows session.

5 Click Restart Windows to restart ATM with the new cache size.