

# **LANSource**™ Technical Information

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## *1.0 Overview*

RASport allows Windows NT™ communications programs to share an Windows NT™ serial port with RAS (Remote Access Service). For a description of RAS, see pp.533-535 Microsoft® Windows NT™ System Guide.

The RASport setup dialog lists all the serial COM ports that are available on the Windows NT™ system.

## *1.1 Using RASport*

When you specify that RASport should use a COM port, RASport will provide two different names for that COM port ...

- 1/.     The original COM port name (e.g. COM2)
- 2/.     The extra COM port name (e.g. RASPORT2, or perhaps COM3)

After RASport has been started, both of these COMMA port names will be visible to Windows NT™ communications programs (like RAS, FAXport, and Windows Terminal) ...

- 1/.     The original COM port name (e.g. COM2) should only be used by RAS.
- 2/.     The extra COM port name (e.g. RASPORT2, or perhaps COM3) can be used by any non-RAS communications program (e.g. FAXport, and Terminal) even while RAS has opened the original COM port name and is listening for an incoming call.

## *1.2 Handling Inbound And Outbound Calls*

- a)     The current version of RASport supports RAS dial-in, but not RAS dial-out (so do not dial an outbound RAS connection on a COM port that is being shared by RASport).
- b)     RASport monitors I/O activity on each COM port, to determine when the port is idle (where 'idle' means that the application has open the port, but is merely sitting there waiting for an incoming call) ...
  - i/.     If a program (e.g. FAXport or Terminal) tries to open the extra COM port name, while RAS is actively handling an incoming call through the original COM port name, then the attempt to open the extra COM port will be failed (and the RAS connection will not be interrupted). If this happens, simply wait until the RAS connection has finished: as soon as RAS is idling, waiting for an incoming call, then the attempt to open the extra COM port name will succeed.
  - ii/.    The current version of RASport supports adaptive dial-in connections on the extra COM port, only if that extra COM port is being used by FAXport (not by any other application); whenever an application other than FAXport is using the extra COM port, then RAS will not be able to receive incoming calls.

If FAXport is using the extra COM port but has allowed the line to idle (because it has no outbound faxes to send, and is merely listening for an incoming fax), then RASport will use the modem's adaptive answer to

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route any incoming call to the correct program: incoming data calls are passed to RAS, and incoming fax calls are passed to FAXport.

iii/. Only one application at a time can be using the extra COM port. For example, if the extra COM port is being used by FAXport, then you will not be able to open that COM port using Windows Terminal program.

iv/. RASport watches the modem initialization strings that are sent by RAS, so that whenever application finishes using the extra COM port, RASport can reinitialize the modem into the state expected by RAS. RASport will be confused by the multitude of strings that RAS sends to the modem, when RAS is trying to detect the type of modem (when you use Control Panel/Network to install RAS, or to configure it for a new COM port or new type of modem). Control Panel will tell you to restart the system, whenever you change the RAS settings: you should do this (RASport will not be able to properly reinitialize the modem until after the system is restarted; you will see the following RASport message in the Windows NT™ system Event Log "The last modem initialization string captured from RAS did not contain the expected 'Answer On' (i.e. SO=)").

### *1.3 Choosing Extra COM Port Names*

The default 'extra' COM port names that are created by RASport are something like "RASPORTCOM1". However, some applications (e.g. Terminal) are unable to 'see' COM ports that are called anything other than COMx (e.g. COM3). If you will want to use one of these applications to open the extra COM port, use the '&Name...' button on the RASport Setup dialog to override the default name.

### *1.4 RASport Error Reporting*

When RASport is used (or abused), RASport cannot display messages on the Windows desktop (because RASport is an Windows NT™ kernel-mode device driver). Instead, information messages (for example, which say that RASport is loaded successfully), and any error messages, can be displayed using the Windows NT system Event Log.

### *1.5 Supported Modems And Serial Ports*

RASport has been tested only with SERIAL.SYS (the standard Windows NT™ serial port driver). RASport should work with other serial drivers, e.g. the drivers from Digiboard, however this has not been tested.

See the latest Windows NT™ Hardware Compatibility List for a list of modems supported by RAS.

Faxport will work with any Class 1, Class 2, or Class 2.0 fax or fax data modem (there are too many of these modems to list). However, the current version of RASport can provide adaptive answer only for Class 2.0 modems. The following are Class 2.0 modems which have been tested with RASport:

- ◆ USR Courier (07/10/95)

### *1.6 RASport Demo Version*

If the title bar of your RASport installation program (IRASPORT.EXE) says "RASport Installer (Demo)", then the serial port speed of all communications through the extra COM port will be limited to 9600 baud maximum (unless the application that is using the extra COM port is FAXPORT).

Some applications (e.g. Fax programs) will not function properly at lower baud rates; other applications (e.g. Terminal) may display a cryptic error message if you try to select an unsupported baud rate.

For a 'non-demo' version of RASport without this limitation, please contact the LANsource sales department.