ArcBITS Newsletter

ArcSys Hot Tip

Have you ever seen a message saying, LOCKOUT IN PROGRESS? This occurs when the port on which you are attempting to connect to has had more than 3 logon attempts with a faulty account name or password. The operating system performs a lockout. The only thing you can do is wait for 2 minutes before trying to log in. Even if you hit the Enter key again, the 2 minute wait will start over from that point in time. Solution? Be patient.

Blank Page Conundrum

The question is, "Why does a blank page come out before a report?" Most of you have seen this happen. You probably wonder why it is this way. It's a fair question, and since we are always looking for something to talk about in the newsletter, it occurred to us that it would be a good idea to explain.

Short answer: It is something from the 60s.

Long answer: There are two ways in which Red Planet prepares a report. One way is with the programming language known as mvBasic and the other is mvAccess. Both of these methods utilize a statement known as HEADING which controls things such as page numbering, time and date of report creation and page advancing. Red Planet makes *extensive* use of mvAccess for report generation

In conjunction with the HEADING is a Mvbase command known as TERM. This controls how "big" your terminal is and how "big" your printer is. That is, how many fixed character positions from left to right and how many lines from top to bottom. When a report has more columns than what is defined for the output device, the report gets "wrapped" and spreads down the page. Additionally, the TERM command controls what is known as line feed and form feed delay. Back in the 60s, slave printers were 10 character per second devices. It could take seconds for the print head to physically move back to the left before the next line could be started or advance the paper to the top of the next page.

If the form feed delay is set to 0, no form feed character is sent to either the terminal (slave) or the system printer at the beginning of a page. If you specify 1, a form feed is sent to the system printer but not to the terminal (slave). If you specify 2 (this is the default how your system is configured) the form feed character is sent to both the printer and the terminal. Before slave printers became so common place, multiple users were all sharing a limited number of large line printers printing on continuous forms. If a user has sent a print job to a printer and the last part of their print is still sitting in the printer the form feed delay of 2 would push the paper to the next page and guarantee your print job starts on a clean page. Now that the world has morphed away from line printers to laser jet slave printers, the end result is your seeing a blank page getting ejected at the beginning.

Microsoft Windows "solved" the dangling page problem by always ejecting the last page. With a little ingenuity, we capitalize on Windows ejecting the last page, using a form feed delay of 0 and sending PCL commands to define the page depth. The result? No blank page coming out at the beginning! Contact us to help set up this new capability for your office and the conundrum will be resolved.

Details Related to Blank Page Solution

The following is for Mvbase tech-savvy individuals. If you like just how things are currently printing on your system, you can ignore the following.

When a user logs on with their initials, the system invokes a process known as SITE LOGIN. Embedded in this process is an execution of the TERM command where the screen size, terminal control parameters, printer size and terminal type are defined. The typical command shows:

TERM 79,24,0,0,**2**,8,132,51,F

The argument of interest is the fourth parameter which is shown as "2". By changing the item LOGIN in the SITE file for this parameter from 2 to 0 will be the *magic* trigger which will cause the blank page at the beginning of a slave print job from being ejected.

But, life is never simple and it will turn out that one user in the office likes the blank page and another user doesn't. To solve this problem we need to modify the user logon proc in the master dictionary. If my user name is MJA, then we would perform an

ED MD MJA

and insert (or modify) a line so that the proc looks like:

PQ
[SITE LOGON]
HTERM ,,,,0
P
HJUMP.0
STON
H@MARS
P

For power users, the following screen can be invoked from the "key" icon in the menu and choosing Printer Setup. (Non-power users can do this on their own by typing in the command PB from the menu.) This screen defines how many lines of output will be generated for portrait or landscape reports used by mvAccess reports. The first 6 fields assume the report has embedded commands to control the size of the font. The 7th and 8th prompts are the defaults if there are no embedded commands. These eight fields are used when the font of PLAIN is selected. The 9th and 10th fields are used when the font of COURIER is selected.

These numbers have been tested for a HP LaserJet P2035n and work satisfactorily. In the event you change the values and they don't work out, you can always do a Reset in the 11th field and the numbers will be set back to the original.

If you switch your default printer, you will need to re-run this process as the parameters are a function of the <u>name </u>of the printer. This also means that if two stations have the same printer name but each user wants something different for page depths, then one of the stations will have to re-name their printer to make it just a little different. Then, the parameters can be set.

HP LaserJet P2035n lines per page

Field	Value
Plain 12 cpi portrait	71
Plain 12 cpi landscape	54
Plain 10 cpi portrait	63
Plain 10 cpi landscape	48
Plain 17 cpi portrait	102
Plain 17 cpi landscape	77
Plain default portrait	89
Plain default landscape	67
Courier portrait	62
Courier landscape	45
Reset to default	N ○ Y ○ N

OK   Cancel