

## WinNT/2000 – Installing a network printer without the required NT/2000 drivers

### The Problem

You are installing a printer on a Windows NT/2000 fileserver. **The workstations all run Windows 95/98/ME.** The printer is to be connected via the fileserver's parallel port, or through a network print server, and will be a networked printer, but for a variety of reasons you do not have the required NT/2000 printer drivers, you only have the Windows 95/98/ME drivers :

- The manufacturer has not produced Win2000 drivers for that printer.
- The manufacturer did produce Windows NT4 or 2000 drivers, but they are on the original printer installation CD that you no longer have. And they are nowhere to be found on the manufacturer's website ! (e.g. the Brother MFC series printers!!).
- That manufacturer has gone out of business.

This is potentially a major problem since the printer installation wizard prompts you for a drivers disk and you cannot install a printer without installing drivers for it, and NT4 or Win2000 will not accept Windows 9x/ME drivers.

So what do you do ?

### The Solution

If you are running Windows NT Server or Windows 2000 Server, then the quickest solution is simply to forget about trying to have the native drivers for that printer.

The only purpose of the native drivers is to allow you to print to the printer from the fileserver itself. Fileservers spend most of their time just sitting in a corner doing their jobs as fileservers, and it is therefore very rare that one ever needs to print from the fileserver. With that in mind, to install and network a printer for which you do not have the native NT/2000 drivers, do as follows :

**On the fileserver**

- Install the printer as an HP LaserJet 4 or as any other printer which has its drivers included within Windows NT4/2000. Just make sure that when it asks you if you want to print a Test Page, you answer **“No”**.
- Share the printer in the normal manner (if it is NT4, remember to only use 8 characters in the name as otherwise Windows ME will not see the printer).

**At the workstation**

- Install the printer using the appropriate Windows 9x/ME drivers that you have for it. Make sure you install the printer as a local printer on LPT1 – if you try to install it as a network printer Windows will try to pull non-existing drivers from the fileserver !
- OK your way out.
- Edit the properties of the printer you just installed (Right-click, “Properties”).
- Choose the Details tab.
- Click on **Add Port**.
- Choose **“Network”** and click **“Browse...”**
- Connect to the relevant network printer (the one you set up in the “Server section” above).
- OK your way out.
- You’re done.** You have now set up your printer as a network printer, on the server and at the workstation. *Only the workstation, however, has the right drivers to print properly to that printer, but that is all you really needed anyway !*

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