

Tech Support Tid Bytes:

Accessing Data And Configuring Printers

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Once a BASIS product has been installed, there are a number of issues that must be addressed, such as creating access to the programs and files, setting up a printer, and configuring the client-server. In past articles, we have answered many questions regarding client-server configuration, but here we focus on data access and printer configuration after installation.

Q: I purchased and installed multiuser Visual PRO/5™ on the Windows 95 computer that will act as my file server. How do users on other computers access it?

A: Commonly called a peer-to-peer network, Microsoft has built in the ability to have multiple computers use the same files and programs without having to purchase a separate product. In the peer-to-peer environment, it is possible to have multiple workstations use a single drive and subdirectory path by mapping a drive on each workstation to the server. This is a two-step process.

1. Install Visual PRO/5 on the server machine to `c:\basis\vpro5\`. Then map a drive such as F: on every workstation. This way, all the users are accessing the same executable (`vpro5.exe`) in the same way. Note that in peer-to-peer networks, any of the networked machines can act as a server.
2. Set up a shortcut to the Visual PRO/5 executable on each workstation's desktop. Once the Windows shortcut has been created, copy the shortcut to the desktop, right click on the icon, and select 'Properties' from the menu to verify and change the command line parameters. The command line is labeled 'Target:' under the Shortcut tab and will look similar to the following:

```
f:\basis\vpro5\vpro5.exe
```

Check to ensure that the command line is pointing to the mapped drive designation. There are other parameters that should be checked and designated here. If the application being run utilizes the FID() function for file naming, it is important to add the '-t' option with a terminal name. The command line is also where the memory allocation parameter is set and where a program can be specified to load and run automatically. Here's an example command line that runs an application program called 'Analysts,' sets the terminal ID to T0, and allocates 2048K of memory to the workspace:

```
f:\basis\vpro5\vpro5.exe -tT0 -m2048  
f:\basis\programs\analysts
```

Q: How do I set up a printer to work with Visual PRO/5 using Windows?

A: Two methods are available on the Windows operating system. The first uses the Windows Sysprint device, which is how all Windows applications, such as Wordpad and Word, print. The second method is to capture the printer port under 'Control Panel,' and print directly to the device. It's important not to confuse this capture with the capture performed in a Novell NetWare environment. Each method of defining printers under the Windows operating system has advantages and disadvantages. One method relinquishes control to the operating system and the other must be specifically addressed and given step-by-step instructions. Which method is best for a particular application depends on how much control the developer and/or end user wants over the printer.

What follows are example alias lines and OPEN lines to access a printer using both methods.

Method 1: The SYSPRINT Device

In the config.bbx file:

```
alias LD sysprint "Windows Sysprint Printer" dialog,CR
```

Then by issuing the command

```
open(1)"LD"
```

the Printer Dialog box is displayed with the defined default printer selected. This allows the user to easily choose a particular printer.

Method 2: Capturing the Printer Port

In the config.bbx file:

```
alias P1 /dev/LPT1 "Direct Printer" CR,SPLINES=80,SPROWS=66
```

Then by issuing the command `open(1)"P1"` the printer defined for the LPT1 port is opened and accessible. This is similar to opening a printer without specifying a driver in that it allows you to send printer escape sequences to control the device within a program. The mnemonics 'BO' and 'EO' are provided to ensure that the escape sequences get sent to the device.

In Windows, there is an option to 'Capture Printer Port' when you are defining the printer. If the operating system is Windows NT, the following command needs to be issued from a DOS prompt or it can be added to the autoexec.bat file before you attempt to open a printer:

```
NET USE LPT1 \\server\queue /persistent:yes
```

where 'server' is the server name and 'queue' is a shared queue name. Sometimes when setting up the alias lines in the config.bbx file on a Windows NT system, it is necessary to remove the '/dev/,' otherwise the escape sequences will not be recognized by the printer device. If you are having trouble, try removing just those five characters from the above alias example and restart Visual PRO/5.

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