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FAQ

Understanding PostScript® Error Messages

PostScript is a page description language as well as a computer programming language. This means that PostScript is an open-ended system with a very large range of possible combinations and constructs. Its error messages describe very technical aspects of a PostScript program execution. This document explains the different error messages.

The Error Message Format

PostScript errors have a standard structure that is composed of two parts:

- The first part identifies the error.
- The second part describes which PostScript command caused this error.

The following is an example:
%% [Error: <error name>; OffendingCommand: <bad command>] %%
When you are trying to identify a problem, or reporting errors to Creo, it is important to note both parts of the error message.

Locating the Source of an Error

With other PostScript devices it is quite difficult to locate the source of the PostScript error. Fortunately, Creo has a unique PostScript preview function that draws one element of the file after the other (Animated Preview). By previewing a bad PostScript file you can quickly locate the element that caused the error. The common sources of potential problems fall into two categories:

Limit stretching:

- Very complex graphic elements such as color blends or gradations, complex clipping paths (masks), and very complex fill patterns
- Very large pages with lots of images and graphics
- Pages with many fonts.

Corrupted or Erroneous PostScript:

- Fonts of suspicious origin
- Fonts that were converted from other formats
- Nested EPS images (created by importing an EPS element to a page then saving the page as an EPS)
- Files that were corrupted by going through multiple communication channels
- and/or magnetic media

Typical Error Messages

This section lists some error messages and some of their common causes:

dictstackunderflow

The PostScript code has an unmatched end command. Usually this means that the file is corrupted.

invalidfont

Corrupted font. First check if this font is embedded in the PostScript file or located in one of the font folders. If it is in one of the folders, you can try and replace it with a fresh copy. If it is embedded, you may need to use a different font. If the font is a composite font (such as Japanese or Chinese) which is protected, you may have a problem with the protection mechanism. (Do you have a legal copy of the font ?)

ioerror

This may be an actual disk fault, or some other hardware problem. It also may indicate file corruption in PostScript level 2 files that contain filtered data such as compressed images.

limitcheck

The PostScript interpreter reached some internal limit. This limit may be an architectural limit, such as a file name that is too long or that is located in a deeply nested folder. The limit may be memory, disk space or buffer size. In some cases, this problem can be solved by increasing the memory allocated to the RIP.

rangecheck

Some parameter in the PostScript program was out of the acceptable range for the specified offending command. In some cases this is caused by file corruption. The offending command may indicate the problematic element. (image or colorimage, for example, indicates a scanned image.)

syntaxerror

The PostScript code is bad. This is most likely due to a corrupted file.

typecheck

A PostScript command was expecting parameters of one type, but got a different type. Usually this is caused by a corrupted file.

- If the offending command is **aload**, it may be caused by a compatibility problem we had with LaserWriter 7.x. Try using a later version.
- If the offending command is **get**, it may be caused by bad DOS PostScript code.

Try selecting the multiple page option in the DOS application, and recreate the PostScript file.

undefined

The PostScript interpreter encountered an unrecognized command. This usually indicates file corruption, but it may be tracked to a more specific reason:

- If the offending command is some garbage (such as $#@ ₪˜b8), it might be caused by a corrupted image (TIFF or other scanned image). Use the preview to locate the bad image and try replacing it. Also try saving the file in ASCII rather than BINARY format. (This is an option in the print dialog when you print to file).
- If the offending command is some piece of hexadecimal numbers (hexadecimal numbers are composed of the usual digits 0-9 and characters A-F), this may also be a corrupted image that was saved in ASCII. Use the preview to identify the corrupted image. In rare cases it can indicate a corrupted font. Try locating the bad font and replacing it.
- If the offending command is @PJL or %-12345X, this file was intended for a non-PostScript printer such as a Hewlett-Packard printer. Select the correct driver in your Windows Printer Control panel and print again.

undefinedfilename

The PostScript interpreter could not find the specified file. This may be caused by a bad PSImage element. Check the name of the high resolution file. In some non-Latin environments (such as Arabic, Japanese etc.) certain file names may cause this error.

undefinedresource

The PostScript program is looking for some PostScript resource that is not found. PostScript resources can be Fonts, ProcSets, ColorRendering dictionaries and Forms. Normally, this should not happen.

undefinedresult

The PostScript interpreter encountered a calculation that cannot be made mathematically. For example: division by zero, or calculating the square root of a negative number. In some cases the division by zero is caused by a bad scaling. This can happen when you use a scale factor or a resolution that is close to zero.

VMError

The PostScript interpreter ran out of VM memory. VM memory is the part of memory used by the interpreter to store strings, arrays, dictionaries and fonts. This problem may be solved by increasing the memory allocated to the RIP, using lower resolution, simpler files, or by separating a multi-document file to into several sections.

About Creo

Creo is a world leader in solutions for the graphic arts industry. Core product lines include image capture systems; inkjet proofers; thermal imaging devices for films, plates, and proofs; professional color and copydot scanning systems; workflow management software; and proofing and printing consumables. Creo is also an original equipment manufacture supplier of on-press imaging technology, components for digital presses, and color servers for high-speed, print-on-demand digital printers. Creo trades under the symbols CREO on NASDAQ and CRE on the Toronto Stock Exchange. www.creo.com

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