

NTRLS IT: Real Stories  
**Remote DownLevel Documents from Networked Print Jobs**

**Issue / Problem:**

Computers using a networked printer setup to control the print queue on Windows XP Pro will send jobs to the queue as remote downlevel documents instead of what website or program they are from.

**Background Information you should know about:**

What is networked printer? A networked printer is any printer on your network that is accessible by your client computers so they can print to it. What is a print queue? The printer has a place where the print jobs are stored before they are printed. When you are controlling the flow of jobs sent to the printer, it is the list showing you all the jobs waiting to print.

**Resolution / How we solved the problem:**

A library had asked me to setup one of the printers in the library to be a network printer. There are a few ways of setting this up and I will only briefly outline two. First of all to network a printer, the printer needs to either have a network print server device so that it can talk to the network, or it needs to have the print server built into it. Once you have it on the network and talking correctly, you can have each computer print directly to that printer. You can also have one computer print directly to the network printer and then have all the rest of the computers spool their jobs to that computer. The designated computer will send the jobs to the printer.

Using the latter choice gives you the ability to control the print queue by allowing no jobs to the printer until a staff member releases it. This option is nice because it's a FREE built feature within Windows networks without having to spend money on print management software. The print queue will also list the location where the job originated along with the number of pages and who printed it. Please note that you have to have individual accounts on each networked computer to utilize this functionality. However, it will not tell you how much each page will cost, nor is it free of staff labor because it requires someone to release the jobs. Typically you will want the printer to be located at the front desk so when the patrons come to pick up their print jobs, the staff can make sure the library gets paid for each job. This also saves on wasted toner, paper and printer wear and tear.

Ok so I had it all setup this way at this library. I had not paid any attention to a nuisance that Windows XP likes to do which is called "Automatic Network Printer Detection." After I mapped the printer to each workstation, Windows also mapped its own and named it the same thing. So to alleviate confusion, I made it the default and deleted the mapped one I created. The print jobs worked and everything was hunky dory until we saw that the jobs in the queue displayed everything EXCEPT, where they came from.

Instead, I see "Remote Downlevel Document", where I should see "<http://www.google.com>". I did several more tests and still got the same results. I researched the issue on the web and received results

of it being a virus causing this problem. As a result, I launched some virus scans on each computer to make sure it was not a virus. All computers came up clean. I then tried installing another printer for the computers to print to it in the same fashion. This was a different printer mind you, and this time the queue showed the correct information as it should. It dawned on me several hours later that it must have something to do with the Windows XP automatic installation.

There are two simple options to solve the issue. One is to simple ignore the addition of this printer, and simple keep the one originally setup as the default, and the second is to turn off this feature which is located in the options while setting up the printers, and then delete the automatic printer when it shows up while keeping the original network print driver as your default. Thank you for reading, see you next month.