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LaserWriter IIf & IIg: Adobe Changed How Helvetica Fonts Print

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TOPIC -----

We recently purchased some LaserWriter IIf and IIg printers. We also have several LaserWriter IINTX printers. Our designers have reported that the type style of documents printed with the Helvetica font to a LaserWriter IIf or IIg are different from those printed to a LaserWriter IINTX. The difference is most noticeable with characters like "g" and "o" -- one printer prints circular characters, and the other prints oval characters.

We examined the fonts in both printers with several utilities and can't find any differences. We aren't using any TrueType fonts, and we turned off both FinePrint and PhotoGrade, but the results are still the same.

DISCUSSION -----

There are slight differences in the way Helvetica fonts are printed on the LaserWriter IIf and IIg when compared to other LaserWriter printers, like the LaserWriter IINTX. Adobe changed the way Helvetica PostScript fonts print. The LaserWriter IINTX has version 001.002 of the Helvetica PostScript font, while the LaserWriter IIf and IIg have version 001.006S.

Adobe controls these PostScript font changes. They make these changes to bring their fonts more in line with the actual fonts they license from various font foundries. In the future, more and more PostScript printers will have this version of the Helvetica font. Apple is neither responsible for nor has any control over this.

Here are two things you can try:

- 1) Download the Helvetica font (version 001.006) from the Adobe Type Library CD to a LaserWriter IINTX. Then compare the printouts with those from the LaserWriter IIf or IIg.
- 2) Contact Adobe and find out if version 001.002 of the Helvetica font is still available. Download this older version to the LaserWriter IIf or IIg and compare the printouts to the LaserWriter IINTX printouts.

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