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Apple IIe/IIGS: Connecting to IBM Host via 3708

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TOPIC -----

I would like to access an IBM host via an Apple IIe or Apple IIGS for services like PROFS. There is a 3708 in some way attached to the host, and I can log in with an emulator through this device. I'm having a problem with keyboard mapping (particularly the PF keys).

DISCUSSION -----

The 3708 is a protocol converter that converts, among other things, a terminal's ASCII character set to the host's EBCDIC character set. You don't mention what terminal emulator is being used on the Apple IIGS, but we suspect it is a VT52, VT100, or similar type of emulator.

Regardless, you'll need to verify that the terminal emulator type you are using is among those supported by the 3708. Check the "IBM 3708 Planning Manual" for the list of non-IBM ASCII display terminals it supports.

Even though terminal packages may not specifically state that they support IBM host communications and PF keys, many emulators can send the specific escape or command key sequences that are recognized and remapped by the controller into PF keys. For instance, Apple Access II's key sequence Esc-1 is remapped by many protocol converters to a PF1, an Esc-\$ to PF16, and so on.

When using a general-purpose terminal emulator, like a VT100 emulator, you need to identify which ASCII key sequences map to PF keys, after you satisfy the general connection requirements like handshaking issues. Check the 3708 documentation for the ASCII to EBCDIC mapping. To determine if an emulator will send the specific ASCII key sequences, check the emulator's manual or contact the manufacturer. You too could use a datascope analyzer

to determine what the appropriate character combinations are.

In terms of general information, the 3708 Network Conversion Unit is a ten-port, compact, desktop, protocol converter. It enables asynchronous ASCII terminals or personal computers with asynchronous ASCII communications capability to connect to and be compatible with one or multiple SNA host and non-SNA host systems. The user of an asynchronous ASCII terminal can access host applications that support 3270 displays and printers, Network Terminal Option devices, and applications that support the actual terminal type.

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