chapter 1

About the NetWare DOS Requester

Overview

This chapter introduces and briefly describes the NetWare DOS Requester.

The following topics are covered in this chapter.

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The New Workstation Software Components

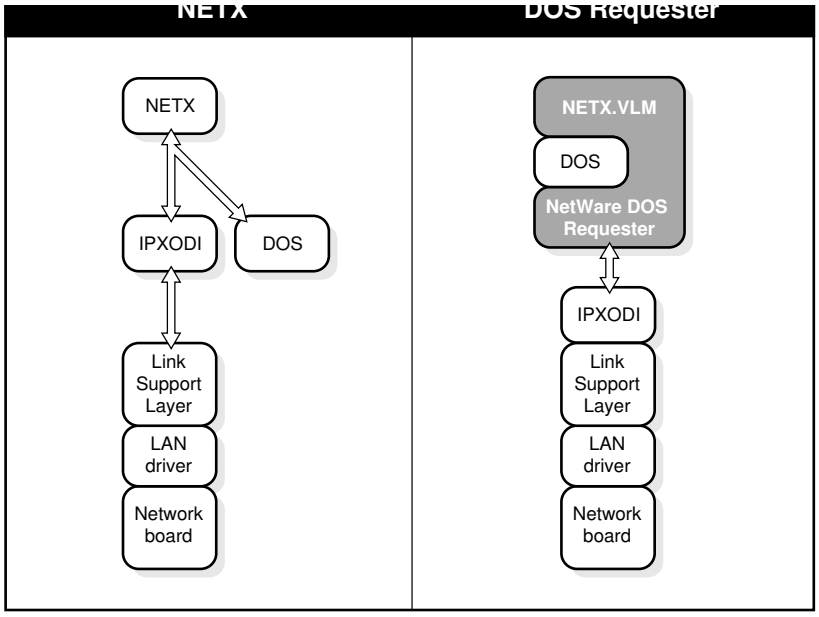
The key components of the NetWare DOS and Windows environment are four terminate-and stay-resident (TSR) programs:

- LSL™ (Link Support Layer™)
- A LAN driver (example: NE2000™)
- IPXODI (Internetwork Packet Exchange™ Open Data Link Interface)
- NetWare DOS Requester (VLM.EXE and associated.VLM files)

The NetWare DOS Requester replaces NETX. Almost all activity at the workstation now involves these four components.

Figure 1-1 shows the difference between the NETX and the NetWare DOS Requester architectures.

Figure 1-1
Comparison between NETX and NetWare DOS Requester



Features of the NetWare DOS Requester

The NetWare DOS Requester provides several improvements over NETX. It does the following:

- Provides a modular architecture that has advantages for current and future applications.
- Takes advantage of memory-swapping technology and DOS redirection capability.
- Includes Packet Burst protocol and Large Internet Packet (LIP).
- Supports the installed base of NetWare users by providing backward compatibility with NETX.
- Supports NetWare Directory Services™ in NetWare v4.0.

About the NetWare DOS Requester

The NetWare DOS Requester consists of a number of files that provide NetWare support for a DOS workstation. Unlike NETX or other previous versions of the shell, the NetWare DOS Requester consists of a number of Virtual Loadable Modules™ (VLMs).

See “Technical Information” on page 73 for more information about the NetWare DOS Requester and its associated VLMs.

NETX

Previously, NETX, the NetWare workstation shell for DOS, intercepted requests for DOS services. At the workstation, NETX hooked interrupts in front of DOS and provided network services for files and printing.

NetWare DOS Requester

The NetWare DOS Requester takes advantage of DOS redirection to provide file and print services. It also uses shell technology to add features to DOS and provide compatibility with NETX.

The VLM manager (VLM.EXE) is responsible for loading the required modules and disbursing requests for individual VLMS. Thus, instead of loading NETX, EMSNETX, XMSNETX, or BNETX, the user loads only VLM.EXE.

Memory Considerations

The NetWare DOS Requester works with extended memory, expanded memory, and conventional memory. When loading in extended memory, the Requester loads in LIM XMS v2.0 memory, not in the High Memory Area (HMA), meaning that extended memory can coexist with DOS loaded high.

The VLM.EXE automatically selects the best possible memory use: extended memory first; expanded memory second; and conventional memory only in the absence of enhanced memory options.

The user can override the VLM.EXE defaults with command line options. See “VLM Manager” on page 79 for VLM command line options.

Backward Compatibility with NETX

NETX.VLM is provided for backward compatibility with NETX and older shell versions. NETX and other versions of the shell shouldn't be loaded with the NetWare DOS Requester.

The NetWare DOS Requester supports DOS v3.1 and above.