chapter 1

About the Netware DOS Requester

Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces and briefly describes the NetWare DOS Requester in NetWare v4.0 that replaces the NetWare shell (NETX).

The following topics are in this chapter.

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The New Workstation Software Components

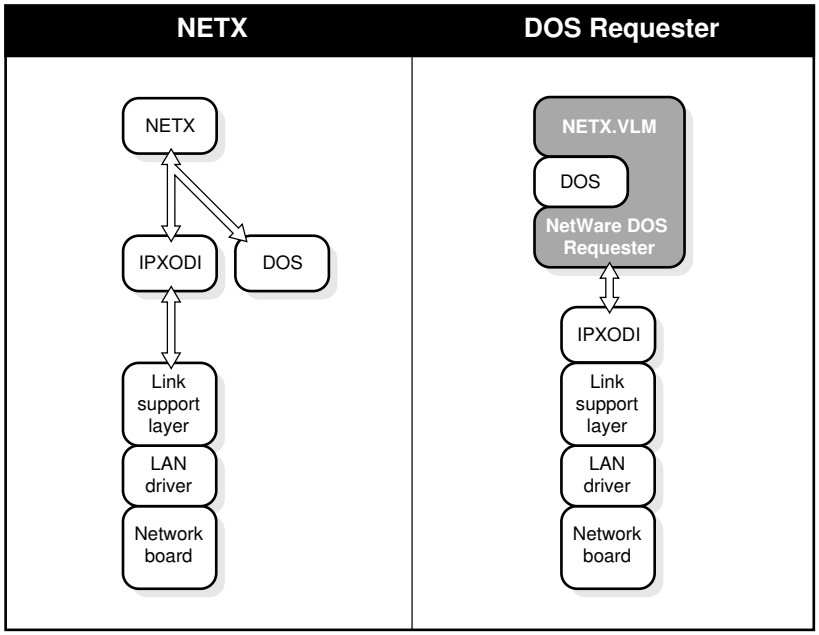
The key components of the NetWare DOS and Windows environment are four terminate-and stay-resident (TSR) programs:

- 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 in NetWare versions prior to NetWare v4.0. Almost all activity at the workstation now involves these four components.

Figure 1-1 shows the difference between 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 new improvements over NETX. It does the following:

- Supports NetWare Directory Services™.
- 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 installed base of NetWare users by providing backward compatibility with NETX.

About the NetWare DOS Requester

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

See “Technical Information” on page 71 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 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 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 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 77 for VLM command line options.

Backward Compatibility with NETX

For backward compatibility with NETX and older shell versions, NETX.VLM is provided. 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.