

Error Messages

As hard to decipher as the Dead Sea Scrolls

by Ken Fermoye

Error messages plague users today just as much as they did at the dawn of the microcomputer age two decades ago. The messages themselves change as new technologies evolve, but the enigmatic numbered horrors persist. They remain as hard for most of us to read as the Dead Sea Scrolls!

Internet error messages especially are often ambiguous or misleading. Many mean essentially the same thing: you can't get through to the site you've requested because it is too crowded right now somewhere along the way.

One of the most common of these is: "The Server does not have a DNS entry." This is infuriating as a telephone busy signal, and often means the same thing! It can also mean that you aren't connected to the Internet, that you had a typo in the URL (Universal Resource Locator, fancy name for a web site's address), or the Web site doesn't exist. Usually, however, it's a Net busy signal; try again in a few minutes.

I thought it would be helpful to give you the following "plain English" definitions for common browser error messages.

400 Bad request - The URL (Universal Resource Locator, official name for an Internet address) you entered has something wrong with it. Perhaps the page you are looking for does not exist, or the server you are contacting does not recognize the URL. Check your typing, especially special characters, like slashes or colons, and uppercase letters.

401 Unauthorized - The page is password-protected or does not accept visitors from your domain. If you entered a password, you may have typed it incorrectly.

403 Forbidden - Same as 401 Unauthorized. You should try your password again.

503 Service Unavailable - Similar to a busy signal. Wait briefly and try the page again. It's probably there.

Host Unknown - Site may have moved. Try looking for it with a search engine (or, if the URL you had was long and complicated, guess how it may have been simplified). Also, check to see if you lost your Internet connection (this happens most often if you're away from the computer for a while); if you aren't connected, use your dialer to reconnect and retry the site.

Host unavailable - Generally, this means the host machine is down temporarily for maintenance. Wait awhile and try again.

Unable to locate host or Unable to locate server - Similar to Host Unknown; check to see if you may have been discon-



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One year's membership in LAMUG is \$20 per person. Other family members... a spouse, son or daughter... may attend the meetings, as long as facilities can accommodate us, but only one person gets the newsletter.

Checks should be made out to LAMUG and sent to:

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To submit articles please e-mail them as text files to davnic@adelphia.net by the third Thursday of the month. For more info or if you are without e-mail please contact me at 784-0513. Thank You, Nicole Bergeron

January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 New Year's Day	2	6:30 pm 3 Auburn Meeting Fairview School	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15 Martin Luther King, Jr. day	16	17	6:00 pm 18 Officer's Meeting	19
22	23	24 Chinese New Year	25	26

Events

January 3rd

Election of Officers
Mac Basics
General News
Question and Answer

February 7th

Tim Plumer of Adobe will present a selection of Adobe products. Visit <http://www.lamug.com/adobe.html> to find out more.
General News
Question and Answer

Schedule is subject to change.

Election Time

LA MUG is looking for members interested in volunteering as an officer on the Board of Directors. Check out the ballot at <http://www.lamug.com/ballot.html> to see what positions are available. All positions are open to members. The person occupying a filled seat at the present time is noted on the ballot but that does not mean they are applying for that position for 2001. So if you are interested in a particular position, please let Skip or Alfred know as soon as possible. Call Skip at 784-0098 or e-mail him at slalemand@exploremaine.com or contact Alfred at adarby31@maine.rr.com.

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Error Messages

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nected from the Internet. If you have, log back on and retry.

File Contains No Data - The page is there but for some reason it is empty. Try again later; data may have arrived by then.

Bad file request - This is a forms error. That usually means your browser does not support the type of form you are trying to use, or there is an error in the form.

Too Many Connections - Like a busy signal. Try clicking the Refresh/Reload button, or wait briefly and try again.

Connection refused by host - Similar to 401 and 403; the page is restricted to certain domains or password-protected. If you think you should have a working password, try entering it again.

Failed DNS lookup - Similar to "The Server does not have a DNS entry."

Helper application not found - You asked to view a kind of file that your browser does not recognize (a graphic format, multimedia, or compressed file). You may need to install a plug-in (helper application) that extends the capabilities of your browser.

I also discovered several Web sites that include definitions of other kinds of error messages.

One, at <http://www.sysopt.com/biosbmc.html>, covers definitions and solutions for AMI and Award BIOS error beeps and messages/codes. It also includes links to other sites that offer BIOS message information.

Another is <http://www.codemicro.com/windows.htm>, which contains basic troubleshooting steps to help resolve the following Windows 95 generated error messages: Illegal Operation, Fatal Exception Error, Windows Protection Error, and General Protection Faults.

Then there are some sites that might restore your good humor after a computer session that produced far too many real error messages.

Try <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5551/comperro.html> for one. Another, with messages in the form of three-line Haiku poems, is: <http://members.nova.org/~dsaum/j-chaiku.htm>.

If you know of other sources for definitions or or information on different categories of error messages, please send them to me (kferoyle@earthlink.net) and I will include them in a future column.

Ken

(Author's Note: I want to give credit to Earthlink Network, www.earthlink.net, source of much of the information contained above. Its site deserves regular visits because it contains a lot of useful Web-oriented information that is updated frequently.)

Ken Fermoyle has written some 2,500 articles for publications ranging from Playboy, PC World and Popular Science to MacWeek & Microtimes. He was cohost/producer of a radio show on computers and a partner in a DTP service bureau during the '80s. Ken's Korner articles are available free to User Group newsletters and Websites. For permission to reprint this article, contact kfermoyle@earthlink.net.

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"Then there are some sites that might restore your good humor after a computer session that produced far too many real error messages."



Click here to visit

<http://www.user-groups.net>



ClockWork Day Planner 1.0.5

Courtesy of the User Group Network News Service

Century Software has launched version 1.0.5 of ClockWork, its networkable day planner designed exclusively for Mac OS.

Version 1.0.5 is compatible with Mac OS 8.5 and supports Navigation Services and Keychain technologies. In addition, this version fixes a number of bugs related to networking and Newton synchronization. The upgrade is free for registered users.

Who needs another Day Planner? You do! ClockWork is a networkable day planner designed exclusively for the Mac OS. The program has an elegant user interface and supports a wide range of Apple technologies. It offers unique features such as voice annotations, Text-to-Speech support, Auto-Power-On for Power Macs, automatic calculation of international holidays and tight integration with Newton devices.

ClockWork offers simple, yet flexible networking capabilities allowing a team of Mac OS users to share events on the network. Changes to shared events will be automatically updated in all calendars of the workgroup.

Simple yet powerful features put you in command:

- * Mac-like user interface
- * Daily, weekly, monthly, list view
- * Customizable user interface
- * Printing to major day planner paper formats
- * 32KB characters of styled text per event
- * User definable categories
- * Repeating events, group events, find
- * Undo for every command
- * Birthdays
- * International holidays
- * Synchronizing files with Power Book
- * Direct synchronization with Newton

- * Import and export for all major day planners
- * Multiple documents, auto save, password protection
- * Shared calendar for workgroups

ClockWork makes the best of Apple Technologies:

Mac users will feel right at home immediately, and those with real OS/8x savvy will really like the fluent support for: Publish and subscribe (shared schedules for workgroups); AppleScript (scriptable, recordable and attachable); WorldScript; Text Encoding Converter (Unicode); Navigation Services; Keychain; AppleGuide; Balloon Help; PowerTalk; Drag and drop; Text to Speech and even Sound Manager for voice annotations!

Reminder Control Panel:

- * Displays alarms if the application is not running
- * Auto-power-on for Power Macs and compatibles
- * Finder menu shows today's events and to-dos

Also easy to get and install...

ClockWork is a completely electronic product. Users can download the fully functional version from our web-site (www.centsoft.com) and evaluate the software for 30 days after installation. After that period, ClockWork asks for a serial number to unlock the software and convert it into an unlimited version. Serial Numbers can be purchased directly on our web-server via secure credit card transactions or by fax order. All you need is System 7.0 or higher, PowerPC or 68K with 7MB free RAM and roughly 10MB of hard disk space.

Pricing: Single user: \$49.00, 2 users: \$89.00, 5 users: \$199.00 with Site license available.

For more information and a free 30-day trial version Century Software at <http://www.centsoft.com>

Don't Forget!!

The next meeting
is January 3rd

Early birds at 6 pm
general meeting
starts at 6:30 pm.

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