

\*\*\*\*\* TECH TIP #23 \*\*\*\*\*

Category - Tape

Product - BMX2

Reference - Timeouts under AOS/VS

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I have noticed that from time to time BMX-2's will give a TIMEOUT under the operating system. The controller will run diagnostics and reline but will occasionally give the timeout when dumping to it.

CONFIGURATION

This problem occurs when the controller is configured for 4307 w/BMC and a streamer tape drive attached (STC2922, CDC 92185, etc).

PROBLEM

Timeouts under the operating system. Occurs more frequently when batching a job to the tape drive.

SOLUTION.

When a streamer tape drive is configured on the BMX-2, the configuration program will ask if you want AUTO RETRY (Y/N). The default is 'Y'. To stop the timeouts you MUST answer 'N' to this question. If you answer yes, the CONTROLLER (not the operating system) will do the following: do a rew or rev, and then go back to the area that the error occurred and the try a rewrite. This will work okay if you are close to the beginning of tape, but the further you are into the tape, the LONGER it takes to perform this function. Since the software does not know whats going on, it gives a TIMEOUT if the process takes to long!! (the software still thinks it issued a read/write command and will time out on that command).

NOTES.

Sometimes after stopping a job that gave a timeout, the next job will give a timeout also, even though there was no error. A FIX for this is to issue a REWIND to the tape drive prior to starting a new dump to it.

DPS-1 switches are also prone to timeouts. Sometimes turning the DPS switch and the tape drive off/on will clear the timeouts, othertimes you may need to bring down the system.

The results you get and the circumstances that the timeouts occur seems to differ with revisions of the operating system and the configuration of the tape subsystem hardware.