

# Tip for HP Users

We may have told you that some versions of UNIX have the ability to restrict users, other than root, from logging in if a file called /etc/nologin exists. We had seen this functionality on some of our HP client machines but it would not work on ours. Why? We placed a call to HP software support and received the answer. (Thank you Jan Hudson at HP-UX System Administration Support.) Obviously, some of our clients had already implemented this idea. I'm quoting from the fax Jan sent. "There is no direct way to achieve /etc/nologin functionality. However, we can simulate it via the following. Create a file in /etc called "nologin" with this command:

```
# touch /etc/nologin
```

Create or modify the /etc/profile script to include the following lines (for ksh, and sh shell users, we use sh):

```
if [ -r /etc/nologin ]  
then  
me= `id -u` ***** should be me=`id -u` no space after =  
if [ $me -ne 0 ] ***** should be if [ $me -ne 0 ] space between 0 and ]  
then  
exit  
fi  
fi
```

This seemed so simple (and elegant) that I tried it! I couldn't get it to work! After spending several hours using different syntax to logically accomplish the same thing, it "almost" worked but I kept getting strange messages. I called Dave Mapes at S E H America thinking that he might have some idea why my script wouldn't work. Without even seeing the script he asked if I used the "back" quote (grave) which is on the "~" key of many keyboards, to surround my "id -u" command. I made the mistake of using the "normal" single quote mark which is called "acute" in the dictionary. Another mistake I made was in "me=" I placed a space before the "=" sign.

I've tested it and it works! On the BSD versions of UNIX, the contents of "nologin" are displayed when someone attempts to login. I thought it would be nice to let the user know some reason for not being able to log in so I modified the first script. Here is my new script:

```
if [ -r /etc/nologin ]  
then  
me= `id -u` ***** should be me=`id -u` no space after =  
if [ $me -ne 0 ] ***** should be if [ $me -ne 0 ] space between 0 and ]  
then  
echo Down for maintenance, please try later!  
exit  
fi  
fi
```

In your FAST paragraph (e.g. RESIZE.ALL), you can add a sentence at the top (after the PA) which looks like this:

```
SH -c "touch /etc/nologin"
```

And, at the end of the paragraph add a line which looks like this:

```
SH -c "rm /etc/nologin"
```

*(For UniData use "!" instead of "SH -c" which is the uniVerse syntax.)*

This technique solves the problem of keeping the new users off the system, but I still don't have a good way of causing existing users to log out! If you have a safe, generic technique, please share it with us.