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At Home in the Network Neighborhood

Are we there yet?

— Kids in the back seat

The first time you visit a foreign country, things may seem strange and even a bit daunting. After a while, however, the scenery starts to become familiar, the customs seem less surprising, and even the rhythm of the language starts to feel comfortable.

The Browse Service is a complex system built on top of a complex set of protocols. It can also seem strange and daunting at first. Now that you have travelled through it and spent some time getting to know the inhabitants, you should feel much more at home.

By studying the Browse Service, we have also managed to provide an introduction to some of the more difficult sub-systems in the CIFS protocol suite — things like Named Pipes and SMB transactions. Understanding these is a prerequisite to dealing with the more advanced topics and sub-protocols that we have so carefully avoided.

Coverage of the Browse Service concludes our study of CIFS. Between the information presented here, the suggested references, and a good protocol analyzer there is more than enough information available to build a solid CIFS client implementation and probably a working server — but you won't really know until you try.

Welcome to the Network Neighborhood.