

# Re: Please, don't kill my WiFi!

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/PocketPC/microsoft.public.pocketpc.activesync/2007-08/msg00254.html>

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- *From:* "Paul G. Tobey [eMVP]" <p space tobey no spam AT no instrument no spam DOT com>
  - *Date:* Tue, 21 Aug 2007 14:54:29 -0700
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I'm not arguing that it's right the way that it is, simply that it's understandable why it is the way it is.

The error with the forums that you reference (with people sending devices back, doing hard reset after hard reset or whatever), is the lack of support answers, which you can't put on Microsoft. How long did it take for someone in the thread you referenced in your first message to get a reply? Looks like 9 hours to me, give or take a time zone, until the reply came back "Yes, that's intentional." I don't work for Microsoft, of course, but that seems like a reasonable period of time to get a fairly authoritative answer; it should certainly have stopped the person from looking for a setting or a broken piece of hardware.

Microsoft was, no doubt, reacting to enterprise customer requests to assure that the devices, which have to be plugged into the desktop PCs at the office to sync are not also connected to Starbucks on the corner, potentially bypassing whatever security is at the periphery of the company network. Yes, they were draconian about what they did (same with many other annoyances that popped up with WM5 including no more WiFi sync), but you're saying that the product is crap because there's a security restriction that prevents bridging of two networks!

If the only way you're willing to have things work is by using your Pocket PC as a gateway, then I do wish you good luck and hope you'll post the results back, but I don't think you're going to be satisfied with it, whereas I'd be very surprised if you couldn't reach a satisfactory conclusion by adding a WiFi adapter to the PC.

Paul T.

"John" <John@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message  
<news:BE511066-9D52-4B7A-9A7B-F74555F0FDF8@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Sure, to fix your one problem that small amount of documentation would do it and when you start building devices, you can handle it, but the process of actually integrating a bunch of hardware with many MB of operating system

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code means that trying to specify at a low-level everything that will happen in every situation is impossible.

Not everything, but important actions, such as forceful disconnection certainly must be shown to the user. For example, when my Zone Alarm wants to block a connection, it does notify me (unless I told it not to).

Otherwise, there is absolutely no way to tell what happened. On iPaqs the problem manifests itself in the following way: status suddenly changes from Connected to "Driver not loaded". That's it. No other hints. On HTC devices, IP address simply disappears, but status remains "Connected". If you search for "'Driver not loaded" iPaq' on google or HP forums you will find hundreds of screams for help. No all of them may be explained by ActiveSync, but many may. People trying all kind of thing: soft reset, hard reset, removing battery for 30 seconds some even sent devices to HP for replacement, but, of course, the replaced device has the same problem: "Driver not loaded" after a second or two. No matter how many MB of operating system code you have, this is not the way to treat customers. I would understand if this would have been a bug, but this was a deliberate (and malicious) decision.

If it doesn't drop the WiFi connection it \*is\* less-secure. That's just the way it is.

Yes, when my PC is connected to Internet it \*is\* less-secure than when it is not connected. That's just the way it is. But if some idiot in marketing will decide that Windows should shut itself down once I plugged in network cable, what do you think user's reaction will be?

The most-secure device is one that does the right thing and does \*not\* allow the user to choose to run that email attachment or allow that ActiveX control on the Web site.

On the other hand I heard opinion that too restrictive and too cumbersome security is actually less secure because it forces users to find work around or disable it completely. That's why ActiveX and E-mail attachments are never disabled completely, but user is given a choice to disable them (by the way, I have ActiveX disabled).

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Well, the gateway components are not in the average PDA (and that scenario is exactly what the security measure is trying to prevent, in the other direction, by the way). In fact, all traffic from the PDA to the "Internet" will go through ActiveSync, if it's connected, not the other way.

Well, I will poke around. Once I understood what actually happens, I will know where to look. Again, before I thought that my iPaq is simply not compatible with my router, which I have no way to fix.

You might be able to find some way to get something to work, but you'd be much better off just buying a cheap wireless card for the PC.

It is funny. I did consider this option, but I decided against it not because of price, but because of security. As I understood, third party WiFi cards will require third party drivers. I am tired of buggy third party device drivers, blue screens, background processes, tray icons and system slow-downs.

So, I will spend some more time trying to pass through the PDA or I will have to buy a WiFi bridge.

Thank you  
John