

Re: File sharing – why is it so difficult?

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http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.network_web/2007-04/msg00243.html

- *From:* Malke <notreally@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 09 Apr 2007 08:31:07 -0700
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Paul Phare wrote:

Hi, I've been reading though the blog so I know lots of people experience this problem. For such an essential service why has Microsoft made it so difficult. I remember being able to share files easily on my BBC micro at school and that was over 20 years ago.

Okay enough. I am having the same file sharing symptoms as lots of other people though the usual solution of switching off firewalls, enabling Netbios or starting programmes services folder. Here is a description of my network. I have a PC which is hardwired to a wireless router. It is new and has windows xp professional with Norton Security Software. I also have a laptop (probably five years old now) also running windows XP but running the free AVG anti-virus software. The PC can access the files on the laptop but the laptop cannot see the PC. The strange thing is the laptop can ping the PC once the firewall has been turned off but it can't access any files through windows. They are both part of the same workgroup and if you view that workgroup in network places on the PC you can see the laptop (but not the pc) and on the laptop you can only see the laptop. I think it is the PC that is causing the problem but I'm at a loss as how to solve the problem

Any help might just save my sanity

It sounds like a permissions issue if you can ping the laptop with firewalls disabled. Here's my standard "network problems" response below. I understand that you feel you've already done everything and are frustrated, but obviously something has gotten left out or is misconfigured so IMO it would be worth a try to go through the steps again:

This is most commonly caused by a misconfigured firewall. Run the Network Setup Wizard on all computers, making sure to enable File & Printer Sharing, and reboot. The only "gotcha" is that this will turn on the XPSP2 Windows Firewall. If you aren't running a third-party firewall or have an antivirus with "Internet Worm Protection" (like Norton 2005/06) which acts as a firewall, then you're fine. If you have third-party firewall software, configure it to allow the Local Area Network traffic as trusted. I usually do this with my firewalls with an IP range. Ex. would be 192.168.1.0–192.168.1.254. Obviously you would substitute your correct subnet.

If one or more of the computers is XP Pro or Media Center:

- a. If you need Pro's ability to set fine-grained permissions, turn off Simple File Sharing (Folder Options>View tab) and create identical user accounts/passwords on all computers.

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b. If you don't care about using Pro's advanced features, leave the Simple File Sharing enabled.

Simple File Sharing means that Guest (network) is enabled. This means that anyone without a user account on the target system can use its resources. This is a security hole but only you can decide if it matters in your situation.

Then create shares as desired. XP Home does not permit sharing of users' home directories (My Documents) or Program Files, but you can share folders inside those directories. A better choice is to simply use the Shared Documents folder.

If that doesn't work for you, here is an excellent network troubleshooter by MVP Hans–Georg Michna. Take the time to go through it and it will usually pinpoint the problem area(s) – <http://winhlp.com/wxnet.htm>

Malke

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