

Re: Linksys WRT54G acts like a dumb hub, no DHCP or wireless capabilities

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Source: <http://newsgroups.derkeiler.com/Archive/Alt/alt.internet.wireless/2006-03/msg00379.html>

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 - *Date:* Mon, 06 Mar 2006 09:57:17 -0800
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Billy Bob <not@xxxxxxx> hath wroth:

I have a very similar situation as Richard (text below).

No, it's NOT similar to anyone elses. Does one of your computers successfully obtain a DHCP assigned IP address directly from the ISP with a routeable and functional IP address? If not, then your problem is NOT similar to Richards.

It's difficult enough following the threads and topics without having someone start a new thread in the middle. Please consider your problem to be unique unless you have exactly the same equipment, operating system, and symptoms.

I have had a WRT54g for about 2 years. I have a PC and laptop connected wirelessly to the router. I have a Vonage box and an XBOX connected to the router with Ethernet cables. Everything worked great for the past 2 years.

What hardware version WRT54G?
What version of the firmware?
Are you using Linksys firmware or alternative firmware?

Then last week I could no longer "hold" a wireless connection. Both the laptop and the PC would lose connection with the router. After plugging the laptop into the router with an Ethernet cable, I checked all the settings. Everything including security seemed as I had originally set it. I figured the router had fried and went and bought the same model.

What hardware version of the WRT54G did you buy?
Are you getting the idea? Numbers, not general descriptions please.

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In this case, the V5 mutation of the WRT54G has problems and requires a firmware update to function.

Incidentally, that I try to encourage people to do is supply:

1. What problem are you trying to solve? Describe the symptoms exactly.
2. What do you have to work with? Hardware, software, models, versions, numbers, numbers, numbers.
3. What have you done so far and what happened?

You did quite well on 1 and 3, but are lacking in number 2. Many devices have version specific problems.

Brought home the new WRT54g and set it up. Configured it with all factory defaults to start with just to make sure all was working ok. Well, the results are the same: I can connect to the wireless network, but after about 10 minutes I will lose connection with the router.

Is it a consistent 10 minutes? Is it exactly 10 minutes? If so, it might be a WPA key renewal problem. Are you using WPA, WEP, or no encryption for this test? I suggest you use some form of encryption to prevent you from accidentally connecting to the neighbors, especially if you left the SSID at the default.

I have to click on the Wireless Network Connection icon in the task bar, click on my home network, go to the advanced tab, then exit. The Wireless Network Connection will then find my linksys network and connect to it. But then 10 minutes later it loses connection again.

Sounds like Windoze XP. Was this on the laptop or the PC? Do you have SP2 installed and all the monumental pile of updates, patches, and fixes from Microsoft? What manner of wireless card or device are you using in the laptop and the PC?

Same problem with 2 routers on 2 different computers. I can't seem to find the common denominator that is causing the problem. I have the same telephone system, no blue tooth accessories, no new hardware in the house, etc. And since the problem occurs on both my laptop and PC,(which are located in 2 different rooms), it is really hard to pinpoint.

Hang on while I fire up the crystal ball. It never fails to see the obscure, but often had problems with the obvious. Ah, finally booted and the genie is ready....

I can't tell if it's interference from some other system by your

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symptoms. More data is needed. Having it die EXACTLY after 10 minutes of connection does not sound like interference. It sounds more like a WPA key timing negotiation issue, a power management issue on the laptop that's shutting down the wireless to save power, or something similar. It's improbable that it has magically happened on two routers and two wireless computers, so these are unlikely but still worth checking.

Another possibility that might fit the pattern are wireless web cameras. These can be set to send a picture every few minutes. The 10 minute interval is the key to the problem. If the camera is nearby, running high power, this might be the cause.

Another all too common source of garbage are mesh networks. I have a very dim view of these "free" municipal networks. They tend to run high power (Tropos uses 1 watt into 6dBi omnis) and are located public places. The most common use (or excuse) for these are installing security cameras so the police can keep an eye on public places without paying for the backhaul. It's difficult to tell if you have one of these around without knowing your location. It also doesn't fit your described interference pattern as the interference from mesh networks tends to be continuous. Don't assume that a mesh uses only one channel. There are those (Belaire Networks) that uses two channels. Try Google using: "municipal wireless network your_city_here" and see if anything is planned. You may just have ended up next to the test system. Also check if there are any WISP (wireless ISP's) in your city. If so, call them and ask.

There are plenty of non-802.11 sources that can also cause problems. Microwave ovens, microwave heaters, X10 video cameras, proprietary modulation links, WISP backhauls, ad nauseum.

Try moving to a different non-overlapping channel (1, 6, 11) and see if the problem changes. If it doesn't, then it *MAY* not be interference and it probably is something in your allegedly unchanged setup. Don't use any of the in between channels or you'll get interference from both adjacent non-overlapping channels.

Also try looking for the interference. Fire up Netstumbler on your laptop and see if there are any nearby strong 802.11 signals. If that shows nothing, get a Live CD with Kismet and you can see clients and blank SSID access points that Netstumbler will not show. I suggest Security Auditor CD.

A better description of the loss of connection timing would be nice. Also some clue as to if the throughput (download speed) is normal when it's working for the first 10 minutes. If it's slow, jerky and erratic, it's interference of some sorts where it takes 10 minutes for your wireless client to finally give up.

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