Using Microsoft Vista and Windows XP to Manage Wireless Network Connections

Summary
This document explains how to use Microsoft Vista and Windows XP (SP2 and SP 1) to join a wireless network and set up wireless security for your NETGEAR wireless adapter. It also explains how to turn on and off wireless network management for Windows XP.

Wireless Networks
Wireless networks may be unsecured (open), secure, or hidden. Wi-Fi hotspots typically use unsecured networks to allow easy access. For most other wireless networks, wireless security is recommended to protect networks from unauthorized access.

- **Unsecure (Open) networks**: No wireless security is used.
- **Secure networks**: Wireless security such as WEP, WPA, or WPA2-PSK is used to protect this network. To join a secure network, a wireless device must be configured with exactly the same security settings as the network.
- **Hidden Networks**: Hidden networks do not broadcast their network name (also called the SSID or ESSID). To join a hidden network, you must know the network name.

If you do not want to join a secure network or a hidden network, select a different network, or try a location with an open network.

The NETGEAR Smart Wizard and Microsoft Vista
When you install a NETGEAR product that is Vista-compatible, you can choose to use the NETGEAR Smart Wizard or Microsoft Vista to manage your wireless connections. Choose the option that you want to use during installation. You will be able to use either the NETGEAR Smart Wizard or Microsoft Vista to manage your wireless connections. You do not need to adjust any settings in Microsoft Vista in order to do this.
Managing Wireless Connections with Microsoft Vista

You can use Microsoft Vista Network Sharing to join a wireless network and to set up wireless security for your wireless adapter. You must know the wireless network name (also called the SSID or ESSID), and wireless security settings such as WEP keys or passphrases, if used.

To join a wireless network:

1. On the Control Panel select Network and Internet, and then select Network and Sharing Center.

2. Select Connect to a Network.

   Selecting Wireless in the Show drop-down list shows only wireless networks. Hidden SSID networks are listed as Unnamed Network.

3. Select the network that you want to join.

   You can use the mouse to roll over this network to view network details.

4. Click Connect.

5. If the network uses security features such as a WEP key or password you will be prompted to enter them.

Note: After you join the network you can save the network settings in a Profile with the NETGEAR Smart Wizard. See the NETGEAR manual for your product for instructions.
The NETGEAR Smart Wizard and Microsoft Windows XP

When you install a NETGEAR product, you can choose to use the NETGEAR Smart Wizard or Windows XP to manage your wireless connections.

Choosing the NETGEAR Smart Wizard turns off Windows XP wireless network management. You can turn it back on from the Wireless Networks tab, as explained in the following section of this document.

You can use the Wireless Networks tab in Windows to:

- Turn on or off Windows XP wireless network management.
- Connect to a wireless network and set up wireless security for your wireless adapter.

**Turning On or Off the Windows XP Wireless Network Management**

Follow these steps:

1. Go to the Windows Control Panel and select Network Connections.

2. Choose the Wireless Network Connection.
3. Right click, and select Properties.

4. Click the Wireless Networks tab.

5. On the Wireless Networks tab locate the “Use Windows to configure my wireless settings” check box.

   To use Windows XP, select this check box. If it is unchecked, then you can use the NETGEAR Smart Wizard for your wireless settings.

6. If you changed the check box, click OK to confirm the change.
Windows XP Joining a Wireless Network

If you want to use Windows XP to manage your wireless connections, the “Use Windows to configure my wireless settings” check box must be selected on the Wireless Networks tab as explained in the previous section of this document. To join a hidden network, see “Windows XP Joining a Hidden Wireless Network.”

To join a wireless network:

1. Go to Wireless Network Connection Properties.
   Control Panel > Network Connections > Wireless Network Connection > Right-click > View Available Wireless Networks

2. Select a wireless network and click Connect.

3. If the network uses wireless security you are prompted to enter the wireless security settings. If you do not want to connect to a secure network you can cancel.

Windows XP Joining a Hidden Wireless Network

If you want to use Windows XP to manage your wireless connections, the “Use Windows to configure my wireless settings” check box must be selected on the Wireless Networks tab as explained in the previous section of this document.

Windows XP does not display hidden networks. To join a hidden network you must know that it is available, and you must know the network name (SSID) of the hidden network. The NETGEAR Smart Wizard displays hidden networks on the list of available networks, but the network name (SSID) is blank.

To join a hidden SSID wireless network:

1. Go to Wireless Network Connection Properties.
   Control Panel > Network Connections > Wireless Network Connection > right-click > Properties
2. On the Wireless Networks tab select the network and click Add.

   The Wireless network properties window opens.

3. On the Association tab type the Network name (SSID) and then click OK.

4. In the Wireless Network (Connection) Window click Connect.

5. If the network uses wireless security you are prompted to enter the wireless security settings. If you do not want to connect to a secure network you can cancel.

**Conclusion**

You can join a wireless network and set up wireless security for your NETGEAR wireless adapter with the NETGEAR Smart Wizard, Vista, or Windows XP (SP2 and SP1). If you want to use Windows XP to manage your network connections then the “Use Windows to configure my wireless settings” check box must be selected.

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