



# Network Notes

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### Special points of interest in this issue:

- Most WANs are deployed with no security or default settings
- Chernobyl virus is back
- ANS becomes Network Instruments partner
- Denver Business Expo coming in April

## Holiday Greetings

The entire staff at Access Network Solutions would like to wish everyone and their families a safe and Happy Holiday Season. We look forward to servicing your computer and networking needs in the New Year.



## Wireless Networks - Are you Secure?

Wireless (802.11x) networks or WLANs are being deployed just about everywhere. From small home office networks to retail stores, WLANs can provide you with connectivity to file servers, printers and the Internet, but just how secure is this technology?

The answer to this question really depends on how secure you need to be. Several months ago a national retail electronics chain was discovered using an unsecured WLAN for their cash registers. Customer credit card information was being transmitted without encryption or security, allowing potentially anyone with the correct equipment to intercept this information. In a recent random survey, about 20% of WLANs in a local business park had minimal or no security on them.

Retail store, medical facility and most



businesses networks contain sensitive or confidential information that should be secured and protected from unauthorized access. Just like all networks that have an Internet connection should have a firewall, any WLAN needs to have similar security systems in place.

802.11 WLANs communicate using radio waves that travel between a WLAN adapter running on a laptop or other device and an access point, which links users to the wired network infrastructure. A basic level of security that is built into all WLAN equipment is WEP (Wireless Encryption

Protocol). A WEP key is an encryption key that protects the privacy of data transmitted over a WLAN. The transmitter encrypts data using the WEP key before sending it and then the recipient decrypts the data using the same key, which must be identical on all WLAN devices that are to communicate. Without the correct WEP key, the client cannot communicate to the access point or network resources attached to it.

While WEP has technical and implementation flaws, it does provide a basic level of security and protection. However, utilities widely available on the Internet can break a WEP key within a few minutes, and allow a hacker to gain access to the network.

So, how can a WLAN and your network resources attached to it be protected?

....Continued next month

## Chernobyl Virus Rises Again

Forgot about the Chernobyl virus yet? Don't worry, everyone has. Until now... a new strain of the W95/CIH10XX virus--commonly known the Chernobyl virus--which can be so damaging to some computers that it will render some BIOS chips, and even entire motherboards, unusable.

The variant activates its payload on the second day of every month. The original strain, first detected in 1998, activates its payload on April 26, the anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.



## Focus on our partners: Network Instruments

Access Network Solutions has chosen Network Instruments as our Protocol analyst and network monitoring solution for small businesses. Network Observer consists of 7 separate modules that provide Protocol analysis for SNMP and RMON, troubleshooting, real time and long term reporting and trending for LANS, WANS and WLANS. There is also an offering of probes for monitoring of remote networks. "NI's Observer offers a feature-rich and cost effective solution to our customers who are entering the world of network management for the first time" said Steven Wood, ANS sales Manager. In a market where bigger is always thought to be better Network Instruments has raised eyebrows with glowing endorsements and awards such as a Best Of award from *LAN Times*, Editors' Choice awards from both *Internet Telephony* and *PC Professional* and a Readers Choice award from *Windows & .Net magazine*. "We decided to partner with Network Instruments because it's value, ease of use and robust capabilities make it the clear leader in its' class and an absolute fit for our best of breed product offerings" said Bob Faulhaber, President of ANS. Perhaps the most glowing endorsement comes from the fact that ANS has loaded the Observer software on the Laptops that the engineers take to customer sites to troubleshoot network problems. The list price for a full-featured Network Instruments Observer configuration is \$3,995 but customers can begin building a system for as little as \$995. For more information or a demonstration of Observer contact Steven Wood at ANS, Inc.

## Tips and Tricks - Print Directory File List

In order to print a directory in Windows, one must use a DOS command. From the Start Menu, Run command you can enter this DOS command to create a text file containing the directory listing.

To redirect output to a file:

**Command > Filename**

**Notes:** If a file already exists with the specified *Filename*, it is overwritten without any warnings.

**Examples:** Probably the most common uses of this redirection function is to send directory listings to the printer or to save them as a file. (One of Windows Explorer's biggest weaknesses is that it does not enable either of these operations).

To create a file containing the directory listing of the same directory:

```
DIR c:\windows /o/a > c:\windows\desktop\filename.txt
```

After the file has been created open it and print your file.

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Access Network Solutions, Inc (ANS) opened for business in 1996 providing network engineering services to small and medium sized businesses in Colorado and across the nation. Our specialties include, but are not limited to:

- Engineering, design and implementation of secure networks for local and wide area environments
- Security and disaster recovery
- Network monitoring and remote network control and support
- Hardware sourcing
- Training and on site support

With these strengths as our cornerstone we provide our clients with a single source for all of their network needs. Please call us at 720.875.1480 or visit our web site at [www.access-solutions.com](http://www.access-solutions.com) to learn more about ANS and how we can help your business succeed.

## Mark your Calendars!



Access Network Solutions will be exhibiting at the 2003 Business Expo being held on April 2nd and April 3rd at the Colorado Convention Center.

We look forward to seeing you all at the Expo!

## December Specials

### Network Instruments Expert Observer

**\$ 2,795.00**



Observer®: A network monitor and protocol analyzer for Ethernet, Token Ring and FDDI. Observer provides metrics, capture and trending for both shared and switched network environments.



Observer is a cost-effective, software-only, Microsoft Windows-based network monitor and LAN troubleshooting tool. Observer can monitor single-segment LANs and with the addition of Probes, Observer can be upgraded into a full distributed product for monitoring multi-segment LANs and WANs.

Observer offers both real-time monitoring and troubleshooting, as well as a complete trending and baselining collection system to view historical data collected for days, weeks, months or even years.

Observer removes the mystery of what is being sent or received by LAN stations.

For more information, visit [http://www.networkinstruments.com/html/expert\\_observer.html](http://www.networkinstruments.com/html/expert_observer.html)

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