

Xirrus Wi-Fi Monitor Gadget for Windows Vista Guide

Version 1.01

Description

The Xirrus Wi-Fi Monitor is a free gadget utility for Windows Vista systems. Gadgets are simple, mini-applications that run on the Vista desktop and provide easy access to commonly used information and tools. The Xirrus Wi-Fi Monitor gadget provides at a glance access to information about Wi-Fi adapters, connections, and the surrounding Wi-Fi environment. It provides a useful tool for anyone deploying and operating Wi-Fi.

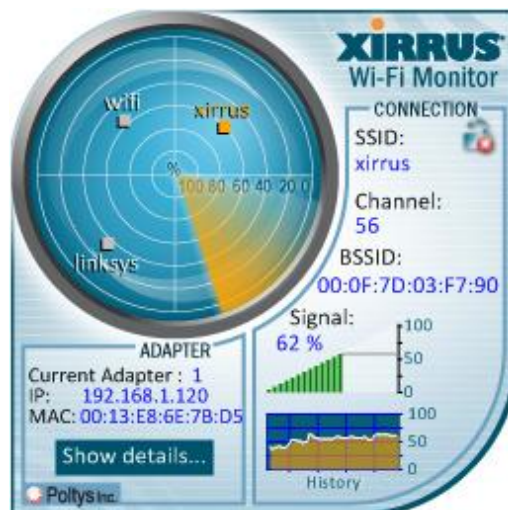
Applications

The Wi-Fi Monitor gadget can be used for a number of practical applications, including:

- Display laptop wireless settings
- Search for local Wi-Fi networks
- Verify Wi-Fi coverage (simple site survey)
- Verify AP settings
- Detect rogue APs
- Locate Wi-Fi devices
- Aiming Wi-Fi antennas

Features

- At-a-glance graphical view of available Wi-Fi networks and relative distance
- Display of Wi-Fi adapter IP and MAC address
- Current connection signal strength with 5 minute history
- Detailed network settings – SSID, channel, security, type, etc.
- Support for multiple adapters
- Summary view when on sidebar, expanded view when operating on desktop



What's New

New in the 1.01 release (January 18, 2008):

- Operates with User Account Control disabled
- Fixes several issues working with different anti-virus and firewall software
- Settings (Radar Sweep enable, Display Units, etc.) are maintained across restarts
- Lists AP vendor of Wi-Fi networks detected in the flyout table
- Lists 802.11 mode (802.11b, 802.11g, or 802.11a) of Wi-Fi networks in the flyout table

Installation

1. Uninstall any previous versions of the Xirrus Wi-Fi Monitor gadget first.
2. Download the gadget from either the Xirrus or Microsoft web sites (see Updates section below).
3. Double click on the .zip file (if downloaded from the Xirrus web site)
4. Double click on the .gadget file to install.
5. Select "Install" on the Window Sidebar – Security Warning dialog that appears.
6. The gadget should install directly into the sidebar panel on your Windows Vista desktop.

Operation

1. Sidebar: When on the sidebar, the gadget displays Wi-Fi network names (SSIDs) on the sweeping radar display, currently connected SSID, IP address, and signal strength.

2. Desktop: Drag/drop the gadget from the sidebar to your desktop, or right click on the gadget face and select Detach from Sidebar. The gadget face will change to an expanded view with additional details, including adapter MAC address, channel, BSSID, and a 5 minute signal history graph. Information is divided into Adapter and Connection sections.

3. Fly Out: In both sidebar and desktop modes, selecting “Show Details” opens up a fly out window. More detailed information about your adapter is displayed at top. A table of available networks is listed below with the currently connected network (SSID) highlighted in orange. Selecting the Statistics tab provides current stats for the adapter. The Terminology tab provides definitions for Wi-Fi terms used in the gadget.

4. Settings: Moving your mouse over the upper right hand corner of the gadget (in both Sidebar and Desktop modes) displays an ‘X’ icon which closes the gadget and a wrench icon which opens up a Settings window. Available settings include:
 - Selected Adapter: Choose the Wi-Fi adapter to display information about on the main gadget face (when more than one adapter is present)
 - Display Units: Select units to display signal strength (RSSI), either % or dBm. A 0% signal corresponds to -100dBm. A 100% signal corresponds to -50dBm or greater.
 - RSSI Method: Select either Accurate or Classic method. The Accurate method is the default and best indication of current signal strength.
 - Radar Sweep: Enable or Disable the radar sweep on the main gadget face.

Tips

1. Choose Accurate (the default) instead of Classical for the RSSI Method from the Settings menu for most accurate signal strength information. The Classical method is commonly used by other Wi-Fi utilities.
2. Make sure the proper adapter is selected from the Settings window if more than one are present in the system.
3. Disable the Radar Sweep on the Settings window to reduce CPU utilization.
4. Click column headers on columns in the fly out window to sort by that item.
5. Click on the adapter name in the fly out window to expand/contract the view of its information.
6. Detect Ad Hoc networks using the Network Type column in the Available Networks table on the fly out. This column will display APs as Infrastructure and Ad Hocs as Ad Hocs.

Known Issues

Following are known issues with the 1.01 version of the Wi-Fi Monitor gadget:

1. In some installations, the error “Can’t Load API” may appear on the radar screen and the gadget does not properly operate. If this occurs, try uninstalling/reinstalling the gadget – in most cases, this should fix the issue. If not, try disabling/enabling your Wi-Fi adapter and/or reboot your system, then reinstall the gadget.
2. In some installations, the IP address field may display blank. We will attempt to address this issue in the next release of the gadget.
3. When 2 adapters are present on the system, selecting the Statistics tab in the flyout window will always return the view to the first adapter.
4. Non-broadcasted SSIDs are shown on the flyout but do not display on the radar.

Updates

The Xirrus Wi-Fi Monitor gadget may be updated periodically with new features and fixes. The latest gadget versions are posted for free download from:

1. Xirrus website, Wi-Fi Tools page: <http://www.xirrus.com/library/wifitools.html>
2. Microsoft Windows Live Gallery: <http://gallery.live.com>, search for “Xirrus”.

Support/Feedback

The Wi-Fi Monitor gadget is a free tool and does not come with a guarantee of support. However, inquiries and feedback about our gadgets can be made by sending an email to gadget@xirrus.com or by using the review feature or troubleshoot forum on the Windows Live Gallery site.

Coming Next

The Xirrus Wi-Fi Monitor will be developed as a widget for operating on the Windows XP, Apple Mac, and Linux operating systems in addition to Windows Vista. Check back on the Xirrus web site for updates: <http://www.xirrus.com/library/wifitools.html>