

Debian-User: frustrating problem with networking encountered while installing "Woody"

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Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2004-03/3224.html>

From: Renhao Zhang (*thinkren_at_yahoo.com*)

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To: debian-user-digest@lists.debian.org

I'm trying to dual boot an old Pentium box with Debian "Woody" and win98. The few bugs I've encountered are falling one by one as I work on the new installation. However, one persistent mystery has remained stubborn. Here is the problem: booting from Windows, I can get onto my home LAN and reach the internet just fine with a dial-up gateway (the Actiontec dual pc modem) as the DHCP server. But if the Linux partition boots, the network vanishes. It pauses for an unusually long time at "configuring network interfaces....." By all indications, networking on the box is functional: there are no hardware related error messages during boot or in the kernel logs. loop-back is fine when I ping 127.0.0.1, but no other IPs are reachable. conversely, the box can't be pinged by any other machines on the network either. Flashing LEDs on my 8 port switch seems to indicate there is a signal present, but nothing is getting through in either direction when Woody is running. The NIC is a netgear FA 310TX for which I'm using the tulip driver.

In addition to Windows, KNOPPIX networks just fine with no problems.

An experienced colleague suggested that there might be a IRQ conflict with another device. Debian boot lists the NIC as using IRQ 12. In windows, the diagnostic tool AIDA32 returned the following:

```
IRQ 0C shared NETGEAR FA310TX fast
ethernet PCI adapter
IRQ 0C shared IRQ Holder for PCI
Steering
```

First of all, what is PCI steering? Is there a way to

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uncouple the two so they use different IRQs?

My own suspicion is that an old USR Sportster ISA winmodem might have something to do with it. The thing is useless with Linux but I don't want to trash it because it still works well under Win98. I think it is worth keeping for those rare emergencies. does anyone know if an IRQ would be assigned by Linux to hardware it doesn't recognize?

The last time I handled Linux was when Redhat 5.2 was new. Back then I don't remember having much hardware headaches. At the end of my ropes, I even tried a few days ago to explicitly declare an IP, hoping the DHCP server might back down and just let the damn NIC talk to somebody–anybody.

After some googling, I found one other account of almost the same problem:
<http://www.linuxquestions.org/questions/showthread.php?threadid=110910>
the only difference is the router being used.

The guy who started the thread never said if his problem was solved. I've tried everything suggested to him to no avail. Everthing that is, except the last one, which I didn't quite understand. I quote the following:

"I have the exact same network card that you do, and have had the same problem. I have never been able to do a net install with dhcp using the bf2.4 kernel. So what I do is just install the base system with the vanilla kernel. Then just apt–get the 2.4.18 kernel source and compile it with the tulip driver and MAKE SURE you also have packet filtering and socket filtering enabled as well. They are under the network options. You must have those two options enabled for dhcp to work with that card. So the bf2.4 kernel probably doesn't have them enabled."

I'm not sure I understand what is being said. Are you supposed to apt–get the 2.4.18 kernel with the 'Woody' iso disc set as the source? I'll try to learn how to recompile the kernel to see if that solves the problem, but I wanted to see if anyone else has encountered similar problems and succeeded in solving it.

Thanks in advance for any new insight.
–Ren

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