

## Technological Sex Change Operation/Wireless/Telephone Network Perusing the Internet/Lying, Cheating Specs

A couple of years ago I set up a Proxim ([www.proxim.com](http://www.proxim.com)) wireless network system at home so that I could use my notebook from anywhere in the house and still have access to the cable modem, which was attached to my desktop. The system involved the quick and easy, about 8 hours or so, installation of software, an antenna and ethernet card on the desktop, and a PCIA card in my notebook. Although I nearly lost my wife and children in the process, and even my dog allied with the cats in hating me, I finally got the system to work. Of course, that involved bringing in Mark the World's Greatest Technoweenie, who fixed it in about 5 seconds.

If I were a woman, I would liken the installation of a home network system to childbirth ([www.childbirth.org](http://www.childbirth.org)). A whole lot of pain and suffering but the end result is worth it. Of course I am not a woman, don't want to be, and having been kicked, cursed and pummeled by my wife who underwent unplanned natural childbirth on our second child because she dilated too fast for the epidural to be given thanks to the wonderful baby on demand drug called Pertosin which caused the baby to arrive ahead of the ob-gyn, this is not a sex change operation that I am interested in.

In any event, once I (read Mark ) got the system up and running, it was worth it. I really enjoyed the setup as it allowed me to peruse (I refuse to surf) the internet in front of the fireplace with a game or movie on, instead of being stuck in the kitchen performing doorman duties for the Summers' animals. Alas, I subsequently learned that my home network system was extremely limited in scope.

Although the specs indicated that the cards could communicate up to a distance of 150 feet, that spec was obviously derived from laboratory conditions, with no consideration as to construction materials used in a 90 year old midtown house ([www.pbs.org/whgh/thisoldhouse/](http://www.pbs.org/whgh/thisoldhouse/)). The reason I learned this lesson was that I bought 2 additional wireless network cards to give my children internet access from their bedrooms, and quickly found that 150 feet does not mean 150 feet if there are (gasp!) walls in between the cards. And no matter where I tried to locate the kids' computers within their rooms, less than 100 feet from kitchen, no signal reached the cable modem unit. The card worked downstairs, but that would mean the kids would have to sleep in the dining room and living room, and I saw some problems there.

So I went to Davis Kidd ([www.daviskidd.com](http://www.daviskidd.com)), drank some coffee ([www.coffee.com](http://www.coffee.com)), read free magazines on wireless networking, and came home ready to move to the next technology. It appears that the newest technology (802.11a for techies) allows for a faster transfer rate of data (10mbs as opposed to 1.6mbs for Proxim), and works up to 500ft or more. This sounded like blazing internet, which, of course, is essential to life. Similar to golf. ([www.golf.com](http://www.golf.com)). Of course, I also learned that the new technology does not work with the old, so my old, perfectly working system that took hours to set up and tweak and fix got tossed and off I went in search of wireless nirvana. I bought a Linksys ([www.linksys.com](http://www.linksys.com)) wireless router/4 port hub (\$179), 2 PC cards (\$90 each) and a PCIA card for the notebook (\$78).

A man who installs a second network is somewhat equivalent to a woman who has a second child. See Sex Change Operation, *infra*. The only reason this ever occurs is because the woman has totally forgotten the pain, suffering, hassle, grief, and agony that she went through the first time, as her memory is totally blanked out and she can only remember the joy. And the drugs. Of course it doesn't take reality long to set in, but by then, it's too late. Ditto networks. It took exactly 15 minutes to learn that my new technology did not work any better than the old.

This old house managed to prevent the kids from getting any type of signal at all. And

remember this was supposed to be 3 times stronger than the old. Why? Don't know. It was as if the signals were being jammed or something. Didn't care either, since this was a Christmas present and was to be installed by Christmas. So I called Mark again. And in spite of his voodoo magic incantations, even he was stymied, although we did discuss putting up a signal strength booster so that I would have my own miniature cell phone tower, if I didn't mind having hall walls that looked like a scene from Mission Impossible. I minded, as did my wife, who doesn't particular care for Tom Cruise. And then I remembered an add for ethernet networking through the phone lines. Hmmm.

Both kids had a phone. (Well, they do make good grades and take out the garbage.) So we returned the wireless cards and went for the Linksys ethernet cards that plug into the phone lines. A kit with 2 cards is \$70. But what about me? Linksys wireless card worked fine in the notebook so long as I didn't take it into the kids' rooms. No problem there. Go to [www.cnet.com](http://www.cnet.com) for wireless advice. There is a huge difference in speed on my wireless notebook, and the kids are having no difficulties at all. We have a fax machine that works on the same phone line, as well as an intercom. All seem to work with one another. This would work great in a small office.

Moral: Avoid sex change operations at all costs. Try [www.andrology.com](http://www.andrology.com).