

## Blog Export: Rasmus' Toys Page, <http://toys.lerdorf.com/>

Sunday, January 16, 2005

### What's in your travel bag?

I travel quite a bit and a couple of people have asked me what I bring along. So here it is. I emptied my computer knapsack onto the table at the Vancouver hotel I am in after yet another conference. Roughly from left to right:

Spare

wireless cards - Rarely used, but sometimes it is handy to have two wireless nics in the laptop to bounce a signal along or to lend cards to people.

Charger for the Canon S400 travel camera (camera is taking the picture, of course)S-Video cable and 8mm to audio left/right cable used for connecting the laptop

to the hotel TV so I can watch movies on a screen bigger than my laptop

screen.USB cable for offloading the camera and also for connecting the flash mp3 playerCase for the

cameraToiletriesTargus Air travel power supplyLightweight extension cordUSB memory stick which doubles as a

penRSA Key to connect to the work network2-foot omni-directional wifi antennaWRT54G + power supplySpare AAA

battery needed for both mp3 player and noise-cancelling headphonesWatchDVI-VGA Adapter cable (critical for

presentations)Credit cards and ATM cardPassport (preferably from a non-war mongering nation)Laptop + power

supplyNetwork cableUSB Mouse (because trackpads suck)mp3 playerNoise cancelling headphones

Nothing really out of the ordinary here except perhaps the rather large antenna. Also, make sure all your power supplies are 110-240 safe and avoid any surge-protection powerbars (they are too big anyway) since that stuff tends to blow up when you plug them into a 220V outlet.

Posted by Rasmus in WIFI Toys at 01:10

hey rasmus,

what kind of antenna are you using with your linksys (the long thingie)?

re, tc

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 02:47

It is a HyperlinkTech one. You can buy it here:

[http://www.sharperconcepts.net/product\\_info.php?cPath=21\\_27&products\\_id=112](http://www.sharperconcepts.net/product_info.php?cPath=21_27&products_id=112)

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 02:53

No one that have tryd linksys own wrt54g\* antennas?

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 10:08

What do you do when you want to secure all this stuff (and not have to lug it around)? Lock it in a suitcase in your room? Hotel safe?

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 11:37

Secure it? From what? The cleaning lady stealing my antenna? That seems highly unlikely. I tend to always have the laptop with me, unless of course when I put it down at a conference and someone steals it.

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 12:26

Well, yeah, mainly the laptop. For those times I don't have a car to lock it in I'm loath to leave something like that in a hotel/motel room, but don't want to always carry it around either.

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 12:40

is the high antenna making any difference?or should o stay sttuck with the originals+')

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 17:07

It is an 8.5 dBi gain antenna, so yes, it makes a big difference. The radio in the WRT54G is also quite sensitive so I can pick up everything with this combination.

Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 18:00

"preferably from a non-war mongering nation"

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Like Saddam-era Iraq?

BTW, what is the big antenna for? To pick up WIFI from the nearest Starbucks?  
Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 19:27

No, I am quite sure an Iraqi passport is a hassle to travel on as well.  
Anonymous on Jan 16 2005, 23:34

Could you describe how you use the antenna and WRT54G? Is it to grab a signal from a (public?) wireless network and relay it to the Mac? Do you connect the Mac to the WRT54G using wires, wireless?  
Anonymous on Jan 17 2005, 02:25

What kind of bag do you use to carry all these stuff? It has to be really really big.  
Anonymous on Jan 17 2005, 13:20

"Toiletries"

No change of clothes?  
Anonymous on Jan 17 2005, 13:44

The WRT54G radio is much better than the built-in Powerbook one, so I use the WRT in client mode with the 8.5dBi gain antenna to pick up a signal. Sometimes when you are in the conference hotel and the conference has wifi the rooms tend to be just out of reach. With this combination you are back in reach. And yes, then I just use a wired connection from the laptop to the WRT. When I am extremely lucky there will be another WRT with LazyWDS enabled on the other end and then I can bounce the signal along and connect wirelessly to my WRT.  
Anonymous on Jan 17 2005, 14:23

You seem to know quite a bit about connecting to weak wireless signals. Here's a question to which I am seeking an answer in simple terms.....I will be thankful to you. I can pick up a very weak wireless signal at some high elevation places in my house (upstairs) from an open wireless network at a nearby coffee shop. I have talked to the coffee shop people and they seem to not mind my picking up their stray signal, but will not cooperate with me to extend their signal because then their network will slow down out of overusage. According to them, I can use their weak signal because that they can't do anything about. Can you tell me how I can take this weak signal and amplify it so that I can get a strong signal everywhere in the house. I don't know what kind of a router the coffee shop has....so can't go out and buy a repeater because they are brand specific. Your antenna and associated gadgetery seemed something like I may be needing. BTW...I have a Powerbook G4 and a PC laptop both equipped with wireless access cards that I can use for the purpose. Could you please explain in a stepwise manner. I will be really thankful!  
Anonymous on Jan 23 2005, 12:25

Cool setup Rasmus!

It is exactly what I need to do. And since I even have a WRT54G... perfect! A couple quick questions:

- What firmware are you using to use the WRT in client mode?
- Do you hook your antenna into just one of the antenna 'ports'? The other is the stock rubber duckie? Do you use firmware antenna selection?
- Do you mess with the antenna power settings? Does this help with reception at all? Or just sending?

Thanks for the insight into what works for you.  
Clark  
Anonymous on Feb 14 2005, 08:22

- Sveasoft firmware.
- Antenna goes into the left plug when looking at the front of the WRT, and yes, I leave the stock antenna in the other one and let the WRT figure out which to use. It is supposed to pick the strongest signal, so you could probably just tell it to only use the left.
- I crank up the overall txpower on the radio, yes. Usually run it at around 70 or so to try to find a happy balance between power and noise. Seems to help with both transmission and reception.  
Anonymous on Feb 14 2005, 08:27

Sveasoft Satori? Or newer?

Thanks so much!  
Anonymous on Feb 14 2005, 12:17

Looks like a spy's travel bag :)  
Anonymous on Mar 10 2005, 20:27

rasmus,

disappointed to see that the passport is no longer danish. ;) of course, that wouldn't you much as with regards to avoiding "war-mongering".

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see you at eurooscon and next year at reboot, travel bag included!

/n

Anonymous on Sep 1 2005, 00:43

Hi Ramus,

I am trying to decide a setup very similar to yours, against a lighter setup ie. with 200mw Prism2.5 card (<http://www.hautespot.net/store/products.asp?cat=19>) in place of the wrt54g.

Apart from the lighter weight and additional ease of portability, the prism2.5 can do alot more than wrt54g beside kismet\_drone, wl scan, wl join, wl txpwr 250 . I suspect I might be missing something, pls enlighten.

Also, I suspect one of the cards you have there is in fact a high power prism2.5, if which case I wonder why the trouble with wrt54g?  
Anonymous on Sep 7 2005, 00:50

> No, I am quite sure an Iraqi passport is a hassle to travel on as well.

As well? Which passport are you referring to? Hopefully you're not one of those far lefties that would prefer Saddam was still in power. And if you are, having a US passport isn't a hassle at all. One from a company like Sweden has far far less clout.  
Anonymous on Sep 10 2005, 17:51

which antena model?

Anonymous on Oct 1 2005, 08:53

Rasmus,

Are you suggesting you really have a working set of Orinoco gold cards? I have two in the closet, of which one is toast. What firm/software are you using right now, and .. can I have a copy? One of the firmware upgrades I got from Lucent rather toasted one of my cards, not sure which! ha ha ha.

But I found they were awesome for gating signal, and I had an old, small laptop set up specifically for that: it ran around with my big vaio and Called Home via the net (IPSec) or PPP (otherwise) so that I could have a reliable connection; otherwise it could bounce signal for me, too (don't panic: I speak iptables).  
Anonymous on Oct 20 2005, 00:37