

Dealing with NetGear Support

What seemed like such a simple and easy-to-correct problem consumed more than a month and involved tiers 1 through 3 of NetGear support before eventually being escalated to engineering. Here's the full record:

Online technical submission: Review Case 23343522

Problem: Functionality

Cause: Readyshare issue

Status: Open

Notes:

6/10/2014 10:16:00 PM (BLINN)

I have a Nighthawk R7000, updated to the latest firmware version (V1.0.3.60_1.1.27). The USB drive that I was using for network attached storage died and I have replaced it. When I plugged the USB drive in to the router, it was not recognized. The drive is formatted and is recognized by any PC I connect it to. I have tried connecting it to the USB port on the back (I believe 2.0) as well as to the USB 3.0 port on the front of the router. The Seagate 2TB drive (STB2000100) has an external power supply and it is connected. The power light is on. No drivers are required. Pressing Refresh does nothing. Pressing Edit or Create Network folder returns "No Disk". I have rebooted the router and the computer and am now out of ideas. Windows 8.1 WideOpenWest Cable
Product: R7000
Serial Number: 3LK3437Y002AD
Purchase Date: 15 Apr 2014

Note that I provided extensive details about the problem in my first contact.

6/11/2014 3:32:00 AM

Hi Bill,

With the information that you have provided, I would suggest the following steps:

1. Reinstall the NETGEAR ReadySHARE PC Utility:
<http://www.netgear.com/assets/landing/readystatechange/ReadyShareConnect.exe>
2. Temporarily disable your firewall and anti-virus.
3. Reboot your device and test your connection.

If the issue still remains please provide the following information:

1. Does your old (non-working) USB drive also have its own external power supply?

For additional information about your product, please visit

<http://support.netgear.com/product/R7000#wrapper>

Thank you for choosing NETGEAR.

Regards,

Carl

EXPERT ID 74007

NETGEAR Support Expert

6/11/2014 7:43:00 PM (BLINN)

Is there a SIZE limitation? The drive I tried to connect was a 2TB Seagate. Today I attached a 2TB drive (not huge by today's standards) from Western Digital. It, too, was not recognized. The drive I'm replacing was smaller than 300GB. When I tried another drive (500GB), it was immediately recognized. So can the router recognize only small drives?

This turned out to be the problem, but nobody at NetGear seemed to want to accept that fact.

6/11/2014 7:47:00 PM (BLINN)

I had one additional drive I could use for testing: 3TB. It also was not recognized. However, every thumb drive I've tried has been recognized. This would strongly suggest that there is a size limitation and that would make the NAS function useless for a lot of people.

6/11/2014 11:40:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Hi Bill,

I have looked into your case and I would like to inform you that your NETGEAR R7000 Router does support 2TB and 3TB USB drives.

Readyshare USB Drives Compatibility List

http://kb.netgear.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/18985

Please note, some USB drives require software to be installed into the PC, are password protected or require a power supply. Such USB devices will not work with the router.

I have also summarized a few questions below so we can further isolate the issue:

1. Does your previous 300GB USB Drive also require a power supply?
2. What are the exact model of your Seagate and Western Digital USB Drive? Do they also have their own power supply?

Again, thank you for choosing NETGEAR.

Regards,

Carl

EXPERT ID 74007

NETGEAR Support Expert

6/12/2014 10:24:00 AM (BLINN)

This is not Seagate's problem; they make drives that work in other devices. This is not the merchant's problem. This is not my problem; I checked the specs before buying the drive. What will NetGear do to remedy this situation? Thank you.

6/12/2014 7:06:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Hello Bill,

I truly apologize for the inconvenience you've experienced with the product.

Please give us ample time to further investigate on this matter so we can determine if there's a remedy or workaround that may fix the problem.

Again, thank you for choosing NETGEAR.

Regards,

Katrina

Expert ID: 74119

NETGEAR Support Expert

6/12/2014 7:41:00 PM (BLINN)

Please specify the amount of time you need to further investigate. I must make a decision within the next 3 BUSINESS DAYS (i.e., no later than EOB 17 June) whether to return the 2TB drive and purchase a 1TB drive, spend an extra \$50 to buy a device that will add the drive as a NAS unit (and consume a router port I really can't spare), or take some other action.
Thank you.

6/12/2014 8:17:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Hello Bill,
To help us in further isolating the cause of the problem, please try to install this firmware and check if it will resolve the issue or not. Kindly click on the link provided for your reference:
R7000 Firmware Version 1.0.3.56
http://kb.netgear.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/24901
Let us know then of the outcome so we can determine our next course of action.
Again, thank you for choosing NETGEAR.
Regards,
Katrina
Expert ID: 74119
NETGEAR Support Expert

The version NetGear wants me to install is older than the version that's currently installed!

6/12/2014 9:09:00 PM (BLINN)

REALLY??
*"Warning! The firmware version you are trying to upload is older than the one you had.
Do you still want to continue?
Current Firmware Version V1.0.3.60_1.1.27
Uploaded Version V1.0.3.56_1.1.25"*
I am NOT going to install an OLDER version of the firmware. DOES ANYONE THERE HAVE A CLUE ABOUT HOW THIS STUFF WORKS?

6/13/2014 1:42:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Hi Bill,
Based on the complexity of your issue, I am escalating your case to the next level for further review and response.
A support engineer from the next level will update the case and you will be notified.
Again, thank you for choosing NETGEAR.
Regards,
Cristina
Expert ID: 74141
NETGEAR Support Expert

Well, it's about time!

6/13/2014 1:29:00 PM (BLINN)

Thank you. I am looking forward to a workable solution.

6/14/2014 1:33:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

This correspondence is taking longer than anticipated and I appreciate your continued patience. I would like to set up a call with you in order to better assist you.

Please provide the following information for me to contact you:

Preferred Contact number

Date

Best time frame (please include Time Zone)

I look forward to speaking with you.

Regards,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/14/2014 1:58:00 PM (BLINN)

Thanks, Paul.

Preferred Contact number: XXX.XXX.XXXX. If the computer will not need to be rebooted during the process, the VOIP number would be better because I can wear a headset. That number is XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Time zone: Eastern Daylight

Dates and times: Monday-Friday after 3:30pm until 6:30pm

I understand that support calls take the amount of time that they take and it's difficult to schedule any specific call exactly, but if you can, please let me know the approximate time you plan to call so that I can be sure that I'm at the computer and ready to proceed.

6/14/2014 2:05:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn.

Thank you for providing details of your availability. I will call come Monday, June 16th, at 3:30PM EST.

Sincerely,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/14/2014 2:11:00 PM (BLINN)

Thanks. Date & time confirmed.

But something occurred to me only now: If we'll need to restart the router (and I suspect this may be needed), we'll need to wait until after 5pm because my wife works from home and needs a continuous Internet connection until 5.

I apologize for not thinking of that previously.

6/14/2014 6:39:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

No need to worry. We are open 24/7. We will still call you at the new time you have given.

Sincerely,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/16/2014 9:29:00 PM (BLINN)

We seem to have missed connections at 5. I'm not available for the next hour, but will be available again from 6:30 to 7:30 Eastern time today. Or we can try again tomorrow for 5.

Please let me know.

6/16/2014 9:42:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

We'll set the follow-up tomorrow at 5:00PM Eastern Timezone.

I'll have one of my colleagues call you on the requested time.

Sincerely,

Pete

Expert ID: 8320

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/16/2014 9:44:00 PM (BLINN)

Thank you. I have re-set my reminder for 17 Jun 14 at 17:00.

6/16/2014 10:51:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

Thank you for the prompt response.

Just wait for my colleague's follow-up.

Thanks again!

Sincerely,

Pete

Expert ID: 8320

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/17/2014 9:24:00 PM (BLINN)

Well, I seem to have been stood up again. Once again, I was here at 5 and prepared for the call. Once again, there was no call. Should we try again tomorrow or will I just waste another 25-30 minutes waiting?

5pm Eastern time will work.

Please advise.

6/17/2014 10:20:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

I am answering in behalf of Peter. I apologize for the inconvenience of not calling you on your preferred time. We will set another call back tomorrow 5pm Eastern. Again, I apologize for the delay.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/17/2014 10:35:00 PM (BLINN)

Thanks, Joey. I will once again be ready at 5pm Eastern time. No response needed.

6/18/2014 3:57:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

Thank you. Please wait for our call tomorrow. This is for your information no update needed from you for now.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/18/2014 6:46:00 PM (BLINN)

Please remember today's call, which is scheduled for 5pm Eastern Daylight Time. The number to call is 614.436.5876. I'm sending this reminder because two previous appointments were missed.

Thank you.

[The call occurred as scheduled.]

6/18/2014 10:10:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

This is Joey I spoke with you a while ago regarding your case. As discussed, we replace the R7000 for isolation. Since you have 2 devices registered in one name with 2 email addresses we will merge your 2 profile into one, and as I understand you want xxxxx@xxxxx.com as your preferred email. We will keep the same Customer ID which is XXXXXXXX.

Please let us know if you have other concern.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/18/2014 10:26:00 PM (BLINN)

Thank you, Joey. I have made note of the information you provided. I hope that the replacement device will work as expected so that we can close this case. I'll let you know what happens.

6/19/2014 12:07:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your response. Please update us once you received the router and if you need assistance in setting it up. For your visibility, I already requested a profile merge on your 2 account and we are working on it as of this writing. This message is for your information only. There is no additional action needed from you at this time.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/23/2014 10:57:00 AM (BLINN)

Your auto-close system is threatening to close this ticket. The replacement router hasn't even ARRIVED yet, much less been tested.

In the interim, some additional information.

Earlier tests revealed the following:

Seagate 300MB: recognized

Seagate 500MB: recognized

Seagate 1TB (SSHD): recognized

Lexar 64GB thumb drive: recognized

Seagate 2TB: failed

Seagate 3TB: failed

New Seagate 2TB: failed

New Seagate 2TB partitioned as 2 1TB drives: failed

New Seagate 2TB partitioned as 4 500MB drives: failed

6/23/2014 6:10:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

This is Joey and I am answering in behalf of Paul. I apologize for that email notification and thank you for additional information. We already established that R7000 will not read 1TB or more even if we partition it to 500G. Hope that the replacement will resolve it. Kindly wait for the replacement and I appreciate your patience.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/23/2014 8:54:00 PM (BLINN)

The replacement router has arrived and I can report that the results are the same. That is:

Seagate 300MB: recognized

Seagate 500MB: recognized

Seagate 1TB (SSHD): recognized

Lexar 64GB thumb drive: recognized

Seagate 2TB: failed

Seagate 3TB: failed

New Seagate 2TB: failed

New Seagate 2TB partitioned as 2 1TB drives: failed

New Seagate 2TB partitioned as 4 500MB drives: failed

In other words, anything larger than 1TB is still not recognized, regardless of the manufacturer.

6/24/2014 3:04:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your response. Sorry to hear that the replacement did not resolve the issue. I will coordinate once again with Paul so that we can determine the next action. I really apologize for this inconvenience.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/25/2014 11:08:00 AM (BLINN)

I presume that you will want me to return the replacement router, but I'm waiting for confirmation before I send it. Please advise.

Thanks.

6/25/2014 2:53:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

I would like to set up a call with you in order to details needed for escalation to our next level of support.

Please provide the following information for me to contact you:

Preferred Contact number

Date

Best time frame (please include Time Zone)

I look forward to speaking with you.

Regards,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

This is the first time I asked about returning the replacement router. It will not be the last.

6/25/2014 7:33:00 PM (BLINN)

Paul:

Here are some choices. Please let me know what works for you.

Saturday 28 June: 9am to 11am Eastern

Sunday 29 June: 9am to 11am Eastern

Monday 30 June: 4pm to 4:30pm Eastern

XXX.XXX.XXXX

Thanks.

6/25/2014 8:49:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

Thank you for providing me with several choices. I am good with Saturday.

Regards,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/28/2014 2:54:00 PM (BLINN)

Well, once again I was at the phone and waiting for your call. Once again nobody called.

Two hours wasted. Again!

This is ridiculous. Do you have a clock or a calendar?

6/28/2014 7:04:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

I am sorry for missing our set time for the callback earlier. I will call you tomorrow at the same time frame. Or if you have some available time today, you can call us direct at 866-246-5715.

Regards,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

6/28/2014 9:34:00 PM (BLINN)

Paul:

I will be available Sunday from 10 until 10:30 a.m. Will you need a reminder at 9:45? Should I call you at 10?

Please let me know. Three missed appointments in two weeks is a bit tiresome.

Bill

6/29/2014 7:38:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn.

My name is Ann and I'm answering in behalf of Paul.

Thank you for letting us know of your availability. We will set a schedule call back to assist you further. One of my colleagues will call you on Sunday, around 10- 10:30 AM.

Sincerely,

Ann

Expert ID: 8322

NETGEAR Level 2 Support Expert

[The call occurred as scheduled.]

6/29/2014 2:32:00 PM (BLINN)

Here is the information you requested. I will attach NETGEAR_R7000.cfg.

Router IP: 192.168.1.1

Subnet mask: 255.255.255.0

MAC address: Router default

User: admin

PW: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

s/n 3LK3437Y002AD

Purch date 15 Apr 2014

6/30/2014 4:08:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Hi Mr. Blinn,

Thank you for the information. I will inform Paul about your response. Rest assure he will get back to you for further instructions. For now, no action needed from your end,

Regards,

Oliver

Expert ID: 8314

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

7/2/2014 12:55:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Notes added by 8309

Dear Mr Blinn.

My name is Mel and I am answering on behalf of Paul. I have escalated your case to Engineering. Please give me sometime for a feedback.

I ready do apologize for the inconvenience.

Sincerely,

Rommel

Expert ID: 8309

NETGEAR Level 2 Support Expert

7/2/2014 7:47:00 PM (BLINN)

Two points:

- 1) Previously you sent a replacement router. It exhibits exactly the same problem and I tested it with no devices connected other than a notebook computer (to access the control panel) and the assorted disk drives. Do you need me to continue holding the extra router or send it back?
- 2) I had been asked for model numbers of the other devices I had tested, but didn't have them at the time. Here they are:

Seagate Laptop 1TB SSHD ST1000UM014 (USB3) - Recognized
Seagate External 3TB HD 9ZH9P9-RAA (USB2) - NOT recognized
Seagate External 0.5TB HD 9SF2A2500 (USB2) - Recognized
Western Digital External 2TB HD WDBAAU0020HBK-01 - NOT recognized
Lexar Thumb Drive 0.64TB - Recognized

Asking again about the replacement router.

7/4/2014 12:07:00 AM (BLINN)

[Following several calls (no message left) to the wrong number at times when I was not available:]

Why do you keep calling my cell phone number at a time when I have said that I'm not available? The number to call is XXX.XXX.XXXX. The time to call is between 5 and 7 pm Eastern time.

Do not call me at 3pm. Do not call me at 8pm. Call me between 5pm and 7pm. Do not call the cell number. Do not call the NYC number. Call the number I have provided.

Also, would someone PLEASE respond to this message:

Two points:

- 1) Previously you sent a replacement router. It exhibits exactly the same problem and I tested it with no devices connected other than a notebook computer (to access the control panel) and the assorted disk drives. Do you need me to continue holding the extra router or send it back?
- 2) I had been asked for model numbers of the other devices I had tested, but didn't have them at the time. Here they are:

Seagate Laptop 1TB SSHD ST1000UM014 (USB3) - Recognized
Seagate External 3TB HD 9ZH9P9-RAA (USB2) - NOT recognized
Seagate External 0.5TB HD 9SF2A2500 (USB2) - Recognized
Western Digital External 2TB HD WDBAAU0020HBK-01 - NOT recognized
Lexar Thumb Drive 0.64TB - Recognized

7/4/2014 1:51:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr Blinn,

I will call you tomorrow from 5-7PM. We will just need to run a quick debug process on the router.

I will call this number only; XXXXXXXXXXXX

Sincerely,

Rommel

Expert ID: 8309

NETGEAR Level 2 Support Expert

7/4/2014 3:55:00 AM (BLINN)

614-XXX-XXXX. Not 624.

[The call occurred as scheduled. The case was referred to engineering.]

7/11/2014 1:08:00 AM (BLINN)

I have received a call from the RMA department asking where the router is. As you'll recall, the replacement unit displayed exactly the same problem as the original, so I have left the original unit in service and I have retained the replacement until I'm told that I should send it back. I've asked 2 or 3 times now, but haven't been told whether you feel there might be any value in holding on to the replacement unit.

If I have not heard otherwise by Sunday, 13 July 2014, I will return the replacement unit. If you want me to retain this unit during the extended testing, please let me know and please also advise the RMA department.

Thank you.

7/13/2014 8:39:00 PM (BLINN)

Having received no response to my previous question regarding return of the replacement device, I will prepare the replacement unit for return and ship it on Monday. If this is not what you desire, please contact me no later than noon, US Eastern time, on 14 July.

7/14/2014 10:00:00 PM (BLINN)

There has been absolutely no response to my repeated questions about whether to send the replacement unit back. As I have today received a threat from the RMA department to charge my credit card for the replacement unit (which works no better than the original unit), I have shipped the replacement back.

Would it be possible to obtain an ETA on when I might hear from you again?

This ticket has been open since 10 June 2014.

7/15/2014 2:51:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

We sincerely apologize for not being able to address your concern with regard the replacement device. On the other hand, we have been given a copy of a beta driver by our Engineering Department that might possibly fix the issue that you are experiencing. However I will need your agreement first of the terms that they imply before I send you a copy to test it.

Please fill out the 1st page and sign the 4th page of the document. Once complete please send it to customer.service@netgear.com with the subject line: Beta FW (23343522). We will keep you posted once we receive the NDA form.

You can download the NDA form at the link below:

<http://files.netgear-support.com/XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

7/15/2014 3:14:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

I have been given a beta firmware by our engineering team but before providing this to you, we will be sending you first a Non-Disclosure agreement for beta firmware. Please refer from the download link provided below and if you agree from the said NDA, please provide your signature on all 4 pages. Once your are done please send it to customer.service@netgear.com. As soon as we have confirmed the signed NDA form we will provide the beta firmware immediately. With the Subject Line: Beta FW Case Number 23343522.

Download Link: <http://files.netgear-support.com/go/?XXXXXXXXXXXX>

Regards,

Blanca

Expert ID 8325

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

7/15/2014 3:40:00 PM (BLINN)

I have sent the form to customer.service@netgear.com and am also attaching it here.

7/15/2014 3:41:00 PM (NETGEAR)

New attachment has been added to this case via the portal - NETGEAR Form Beta Test Agreement_Signed.pdf

7/15/2014 7:59:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

Thank you for sending the signed NDA form but I believe there is an error on it. Please resend the NDA form complete with your signature and not an email address. Kindly fill up also your name on the recipients field on the first page of the NDA form.

My sincerest apologies for the inconvenience.

Sincerely,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

7/15/2014 8:17:00 PM (BLINN)

Paul, I signed each page (as requested) using Adobe's electronic signature function. I have found that pens do not work particularly well on electronic forms. The nib keeps slipping off the electrons. We are in the 21st century now and an electronic signature should be valid. I have never had anyone else refuse a form that I have signed electronically.

(sigh)

That said, I suppose that I can place a graphic image of my signature on every single page and send that back to you.

Regards.

I completed the form and signed it digitally, a process that I have used with hundreds of NDA forms over the years.

7/15/2014 8:18:00 PM (NETGEAR)

New attachment has been added to this case via the portal - NETGEAR Form Beta Test Agreement_Signed_TWICE.pdf

7/16/2014 8:31:00 PM (BLINN)

“As soon as we have confirmed the signed NDA form we will provide the beta firmware immediately.”

How long does it take to confirm the signed NDA?

7/16/2014 11:29:00 PM (NETGEAR)

Dear Mr. Blinn,

Here is the link to the Beta firmware:

<http://files.netgear-support.com/go/?XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

After uploading it, kindly test also using the 1TB drive.

Sincerely,

Paul

Expert ID: 8324

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

7/17/2014 10:07:00 AM (BLINN)

Thank you, Paul. The information arrived too late for action on Wednesday. The earliest opportunity I'll have to act is this evening. I'll let you know what happens.

I believe that you intended to ask me to confirm the 2TB drive, not the 1TB drive because we already know that any device I've tested that is 1TB or smaller will work and that it's only the 2TB and larger devices that are not recognized.

If that assumption is incorrect, please let me know.

7/17/2014 10:04:00 PM (BLINN)

Success (I think)!

I believe that, after 37 days, the router is now doing what it was supposed to be doing more than a month ago. I have confirmed operation with 2 computers, but I can't consider the issue resolved until the following conditions are met:

- 1) I have confirmed operation from a third computer.
- 2) The "beta" firmware that I installed today has been replaced by general-release firmware.

I will confirm #1 at my earliest opportunity (possibly on 18 July).

Please let me know when the general firmware update will be made available.

Thanks.

7/18/2014 6:08:00 AM (NETGEAR)

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your reply. When you said 'general-release firmware' do you mean to see final firmware release? We do not have any information when will be the next firmware release however we can notify you or you may check our support website for firmware updates (release note included)

Just give us an information come July 18 if the issue still persist.

Sincerely,

Joey

Expert ID: 8301

NETGEAR L2 Support Expert

7/22/2014 10:12:07 AM (BLINN)

My router seems to be working as intended, but I can't really consider this "resolved" until the corrected firmware is in general distribution. So far, you've fixed one router. You should release the code generally to fix all routers.