

Whoa there, logging on awful fast now are we?

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Occasionally, a customer will run into a problem that manifests itself only when Autologon is enabled. Here are some examples:

If we log on manually, everything works just fine. But if we log on using Autologon with the same userid and password, we get a networking error from our wireless network card. Is there a known problem with Autologon and wireless networking?

If we log on manually, everything works just fine. But if we log on using Autologon with the same userid and password, one of the programs in the Startup group raises an error because it can't create a remote desktop session.

The issue really isn't Autologon. The issue really is the manual logon. For you see, manually logging on takes time. If you really concentrate you can get it down to one or two seconds, but under more realistic circumstances, a manual logon will be significantly slower than an automatic one because it simply takes time to click and type and click. And those seconds are crucial.

That extra time, the delay introduced by the fact that human beings type a lot more slowly than a computer can, is enough to get those services you are relying fully initialized by the time you need them. Locating and connecting to a nearby wireless access point typically takes several seconds. If you use Autologon, the system will plow ahead with trying to contact the domain controller to validate your password, but the wireless networking card hasn't found the base station, and you get an error. (Nitpickers should at this point stifle screams of *cached credentials*. I'm just giving an example. If you don't like this example, go find another one.) I don't know whether it will help or not, but you can try [disabling Fast Logon](#) and forcing the system to wait for the network to be fully initialized before allowing logon to occur.

In the second case, the problem is that the remote desktop service is not yet fully started by the time the program in the Startup group tries to use it. Under such conditions, you may want to query the status of the remote desktop service; if it reports a status of

`SERVICE_START_PENDING` , then the service is starting up but is not yet ready. You need to wait until the service status is `SERVICE_RUNNING` before you can start using the remote desktop service.

Anyway, the point for today is that Autologon itself doesn't have problems. Rather, Autologon takes away the "seconds of rest" the computer normally experiences while it's waiting for a human being to log in, and sometimes it's those extra few seconds that you were inadvertently relying upon.

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