

How to Interface WinTelnetX with TR-Log for PacketCluster Capability

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WinTelnetX is a free-ware Windows application that is a “patch panel” for cross connecting communication channels on a PC. Some of the channels it provides are Telnet to PacketCluster nodes, TNC emulation for programs such as DOS-based logging software (CT, TR-Log, etc.), Ethernet, and Internet. The program and documentation are available on K1TTT’s web site at http://www.k1ttt.net/software/wintelnetx_4_13.zip.

In this article, I describe one specific configuration and usage of WinTelnetX ... interfacing TR-Log to a PacketCluster node using Telnet (rather than a VHF connection). While this is not for the PC-shy person, it also should be very doable by most anyone who follows this document. Learned computer scientists tell me that K1TTT is an excellent programmer and has done an outstanding job on this software. As a poor mortal in this technology-saturated world, I have to say that the documentation, user interface and language therein is not geared to those of us who are not high priests of PacketCluster technobabble. Hopefully, this document will circumvent the need to get a PhD in computer science and data communication in order to enjoy the benefits of this excellent tool.

Overview

What this is all about is using a Windows PC as an interface between a PacketCluster node on the Internet and the TNC connection to TR-Log running on an MS-DOS computer. Presumably, any DOS-based logging software that has PacketCluster capability via a TNC port could be substituted for TR-Log.

Hardware

Parts List:

- Windows PC – with an Internet connection, an available serial port and an installed copy of WinTelnetX.
- MS-DOS PC – with an available serial port and an installed copy of TR-Log.
- Null-MODEM serial cable.

Instructions:

1. Connect the serial port on each computer together with the null-MODEM serial cable.
2. On the Windows PC, go to the Device Manager, expand Ports, and open the COM port that the null-MODEM cable is connected to. This is assumed to be COM1 in these instructions. Go to the Port Settings tab and set 2400 Bits per second, 7 Data bits, 1 Stop bit, Even Parity and Xon / Xoff Flow control.

3. On the MS-DOS computer, set PACKET PORT = SERIAL 1 in logcfg.dat in TR-Log (again, COM1 is assumed to be the serial port on the MS-DOS computer where the null-MODEM is connected for these instructions, but it can be any of COM1-4.)

Software

Download WinTelnetX from the K1TTT web site. It will be a Zipped file containing wintelnetx.exe, a couple of text files (so-called documentation) and several example INI files, each of which is a configuration for a specific usage of WinTelnetX such as what we are doing here. You can ignore all the files except the program, wintelnetx.exe. You won't understand them anyway so spare yourself.

Store WinTelnetX wherever you want on your Windows computer. I recommend putting it in a WinTelnetX folder within the Program Files folder. Create a shortcut to it for your desktop and/or Start menu so it is easy to fire up. Fire it up.

1. Configure the TNC emulator port to TR-Log
 - a. Go to Setup / Add New / Com Port and set the following:
 - i. Port: COM1 (or, whatever serial port you are using on the Windows PC)
 - ii. Baud: 2400
 - iii. Bits: 7
 - iv. Parity: Even
 - v. Stop Bits: 1
 - vi. Flow: XON/XOFF
 - vii. Name: TR-Log (or, whatever strikes your fancy)
 - viii. Is TNC: FALSE (I know, this doesn't make any sense because this port is emulating a TNC ... but, don't think about it, just type 'FALSE')
 - ix. Buffer: 32000
 - x. Keep Alive Time: 0
 - xi. Port Data Type: Direct
 - xii. Dupes: 0
 - xiii. CR/LF: 3
 - b. Click OK and the 'Connect Script Setup' dialogue box comes up where you can select Enable automatic reconnect and 60 seconds.
 - c. Click OK
2. Configure the Telnet connection to w1srd.net
 - a. Go to Setup / Add New / Network - Connect and set the following:
 - i. Host Name or IP: w1srd.net
 - ii. Port Number: 8000 (most other PacketCluster nodes use port 23 ... Steve is a big thinker)
 - iii. Name: w1srd.net (or, whatever you want)
 - iv. Is TNC: FALSE
 - v. Buffer: 32000

- vi. Keep Alive Time: 0
 - vii. Port Data Type: Cluster User
 - viii. MyCall: INET (or, whatever rings your bell)
 - ix. AntiLoop Px: < (you know what this means don't you?)
 - x. Dupes: 0
 - xi. CR/LF: 2
- b. Click OK and the 'Connect Script Setup' dialogue box comes up where you can set the following:
 - i. Prompt (first line only): login:
 - ii. Response: WOYK (or whatever call sign you want to log into the PacketCluster with. If you're not sure what you're doing, then use the call sign of someone you don't like.)
 - iii. Select Enable automatic reconnect and 60 seconds.
 - c. Click OK
3. Connect the TR-Log port to the PacketCluster port
 - a. Go to Setup / Routes
 - i. Click the Route From drop-down menu and select the TR-Log port.
 - ii. Click the Route To drop-down menu and select the w1srd.net port.
 - iii. Select the 2 Way box
 - iv. Click Add Route
 - b. Click Done
 4. Go to File / SaveAs and save your work of art configuration file as 'w1srd-tr.ini', or whatever file name makes sense to you.
 5. Connect the Windows PC to the Internet.
 6. Make sure TR-Log is running and configured for packet. (You will probably want the Band Map enabled and a number of other parameters set so that TR-Log is using packet the way you want. This is the subject of another article ... TR-Log also has a cryptic foreign UI in yet a totally different dialect from WinTelnetX.)
 7. In WinTelnetX Window, there should be three sub-windows visible and also listed in the drop-down box in the upper left of the main WinTelnetX window (ALL, w1srd.net and TR-Log).
 - a. Select TR-Log (from the drop-down box, or just click anywhere in the TR-Log sub-window) and click the Connect button (red, blue and white icon) in the lower right of the TR-Log sub-window. The response "PORT CONNECTED" should display in the window.
 - b. Select w1srd.net (as above) and click the Connect button. You should see the window fill up with the results of automatically logging onto the w1srd.net PacketCluster node. This is a Telnet window into the cluster and you can use it as you would any Telnet connection into the PacketCluster.
 8. You can now also go to TR-Log and see that you have packet capability. See the TR-Log documentation, or a TR-Log priest, to learn all the cool things you can do. Both the Telnet window in WinTelnetX and TR-Log are in communication with the PacketCluster via your login. Either one can send things to the

- PacketCluster and both will receive the communication back from the PacketCluster. Way cool ... enjoy.
9. When you want to stop having fun or otherwise disconnect, simply click the Disconnect button, next to the Connect button, in both the TR-Log and wlsrd.net sub-windows in WinTelnetX. The WinTelnetX window can be closed out to shut down the application.
 10. Steps 1-4 above are for building and saving the configuration file to make all this work. The next time you want to have fun, just start with Step 5. When you get to Step 6, you will have to start the WinTelnetX program and go to File / Open and select the INI file you saved in Step 4. This loads your work-of-art configuration so that you can perform Step 6.

Congratulations. You've now participated in a mystical out-of-body, out-of-mind experience. You've spoken in tongues that neither you nor any other normal human being can understand. Yet, you've enabled the packet function of TR-Log for your contesting fulfillment.

KB,
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