
By Erik Eckel

Remote access may well be the greatest innovation in computing since the mouse. Unfortunately, the remote access configuration process is daunting. Everything from antivirus programs to flaky modems to firewalls can single-handedly derail remote connection attempts. [Remote connection alternatives](#) try to overcome these obstacles with ease of use and tighter security. One of the most popular options is LogMeIn. Erik Eckel explains how to configure LogMeIn Pro's features and maximize the usefulness of this remote connectivity platform.

Even if your entire network infrastructure is configured to properly recognize and pass [remote access](#) traffic, simply forgetting to enable Windows Remote Desktop connections, supply a password with a Windows XP user account, or configure a user's server-based account settings to permit remote access results in failure and frustration.

Worse, trying to print information from a remote workstation on a local printer is fraught with peril. Microsoft claims its [RDP implementation](#) supports passing the required print drivers between platforms, but it usually doesn't work. If it did work well, why would Microsoft be touting the 2008 server platform's [TS Easy Print](#) as such an important new feature?

For all these reasons, remote connection alternatives thrive. LogMeIn's free software provides a simple method of connecting to a remote workstation or server from any Internet connected system. LogMeIn Pro, meanwhile, adds secure connections, remote printing support and simplified file transfer to the mix.

Here's how to configure LogMeIn Pro's features and maximize the usefulness of this remote connectivity platform.

Create an Account

The first step in using LogMeIn is creating an account. Simply visit www.logmein.com and create an account using the provided link. The next step, after creating an account, is to load the LogMeIn Pro software on the computer you wish to access remotely.

LogMeIn installation

Install LogMeIn Pro by selecting that option (the LogMeIn Pro link) from LogMeIn's Web site (from the PC you wish to serve as the remote access host). When you create a new LogMeIn account, the option is automatically presented (you'll be instructed to click the Add Computer link). (**Figure A**)

Figure A



Click the Add Computer link when creating an account to install LogMeIn Pro on the workstation or server you wish to serve as the remote access host machine.

Upon clicking Add Computer, the LogMeIn software will begin downloading. The program is approximately eight megabytes in size, so depending upon your Internet connection the process should only take a few moments.

When the software has downloaded you can run the installation program. The LogMeIn setup program will appear as shown in **Figure B**.

Figure B



The LogMeIn setup program walks you through installing the remote connectivity software.

After accepting the license agreement, you can choose either a Typical or Custom installation. When choosing the Custom option, the next screen you'll see provides you with the opportunity to name the system. This is the name that will appear when you attempt to connect to the system remotely.

The rest of the Custom installation enables specifying proxy settings (if necessary) and the destination installation folder.

When the installation program completes, a menu will appear indicating LogMeIn is enabled and online (**Figure C**). An icon also appears within the Windows System Tray (**Figure D**). At this point the system can be accessed remotely by any user knowing the LogMeIn user account name and password. No firewall ports require configuration, nor do server account settings need to be updated to enable remote access.

Figure C



LogMeIn confirms it is enabled and online upon completing installation.

Figure D



LogMeIn also adds an icon to the Windows System Tray.

Connect to a remote LogMeIn-enabled system

To connect to the remote system on which you've installed LogMeIn Pro, enter *www.logmein.com* in the address bar of the computer's Web browser. On the LogMeIn home page, supply your LogMeIn username (e-mail address) and password, and click the Log Me In button. (**Figure E**)

How do I: Configure and use LogMeIn Pro remote access software?

Figure E



Users can, from any Internet connected system, remotely access any PC or server with LogMeIn installed on it. The PC or server upon which you installed and enabled the LogMeIn software will appear. (Figure F)

Figure F

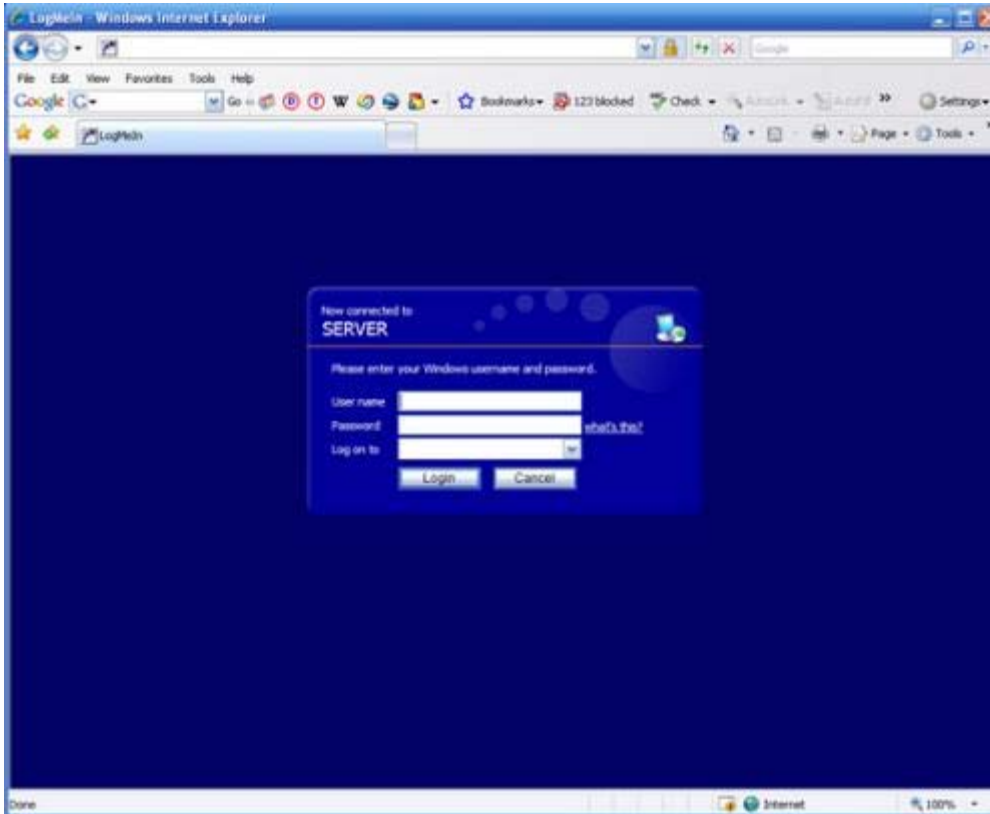


LogMeIn-enabled PCs and servers associated with your LogMeIn account appear on the My Computers page.

How do I: Configure and use LogMeIn Pro remote access software?

Click the link for the system to which you wish to connect. You'll see a screen indicating that LogMeIn is connecting to that remote system. Next, you'll see a log in screen for the remote Windows system. Here you need to enter a username, password and domain for a valid account on the system to which you're connecting. (**Figure G**)

Figure G

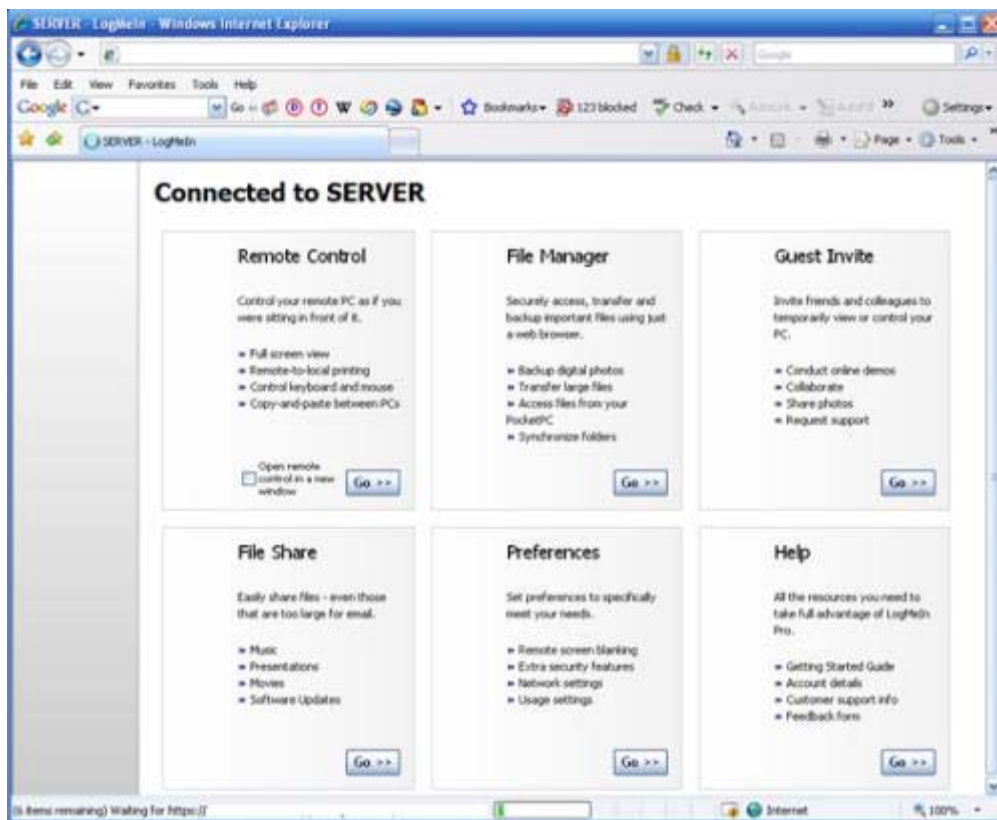


Once LogMeIn connects you to the remote system, you still must log in to the remote system as if you were sitting in front of it.

Once you've successfully logged on to the remote system (by supplying a valid user account and password) the connection will be complete. As you can see in **Figure H**, the LogMeIn Pro software will present you with six options:

1. Remote Control
2. File Manager
3. Guest Invite
4. File Share
5. Preferences
6. Help

Figure H



LogMeIn Pro presents users with these six options.

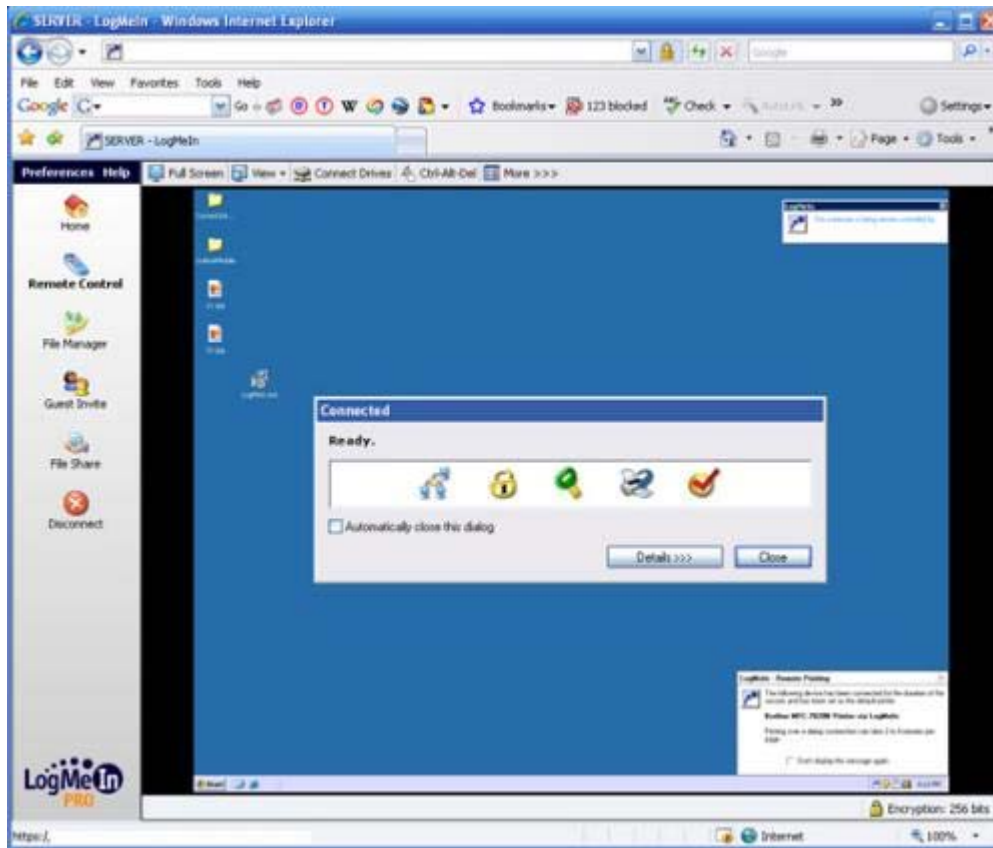
Each of these items provides its own features and optional settings. Let's explore each individually.

Remote Control

Selecting Remote Control opens the remote system and displays its desktop. While completing the connection, LogMeIn Pro redirects print jobs to your local default printer automatically. A menu appears providing three options: Connect My Default Printer to the Remote Computer, Synchronize My Clipboard with the Remote Computer, and Remember SYSTEMNAME and Don't Display This Dialog Again. Select (or clear) any of the checkboxes as required.

Upon clicking Proceed, LogMeIn will display the remote system's desktop (**Figure I**). You can then control the remote system as if you were physically seated in front of it.

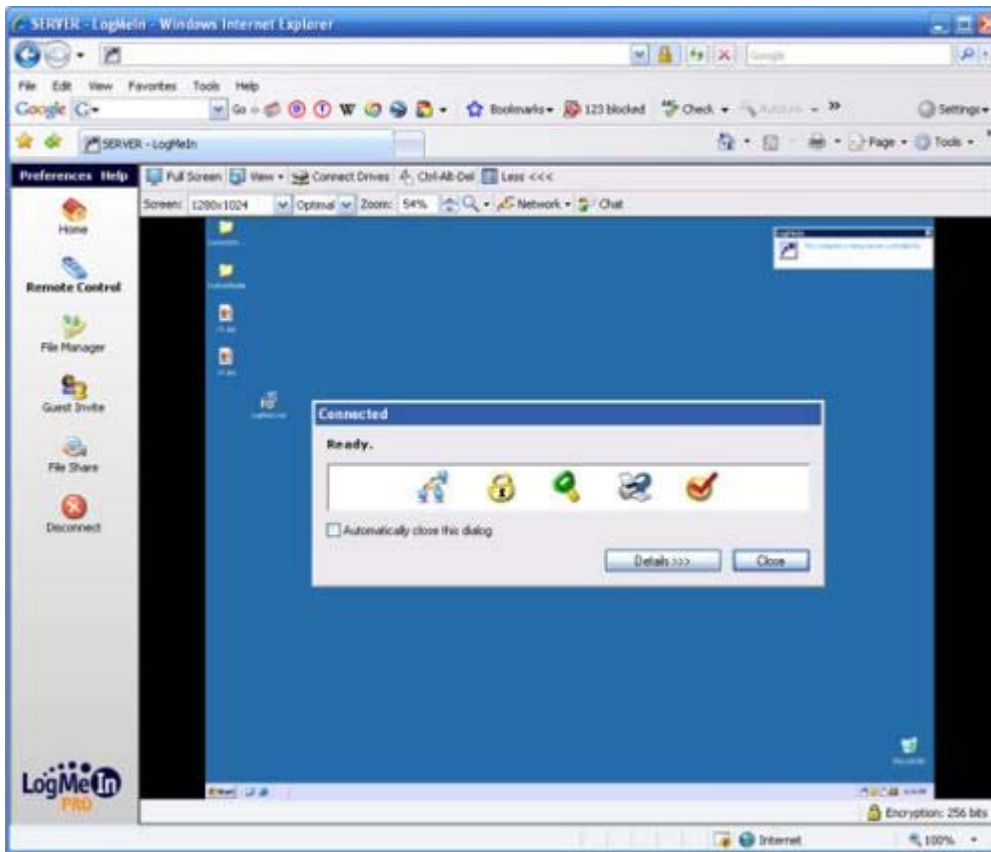
Figure I



LogMeIn Pro shares data with remote systems via a secure 256-bit encrypted connection.

Several options enable customizing the remote control session. Users can select color quality, choose whiteboard or laser pointer mode, choose to match screen resolutions between connected systems, fit the remote window to the current window or view the remote system actual size. All those options are accessible from the View menu. Full Screen and Connect Drives (for simplifying the sharing of files between the two systems) buttons also appear at the top of the Remote Control window. Should you need to perform a CTRL-ALT-DEL keystroke combination on the remote system, LogMeIn supplies a button for that, as well. **(Figure J)**

Figure J



LogMeIn Pro's toolbars present numerous options for customizing the remote desktop display.

Clicking the More button from LogMeIn's menu bar displays a second toolbar. From the second toolbar users can specify the remote screen size in pixels, set the zoom value and open a chat session for connected guests.

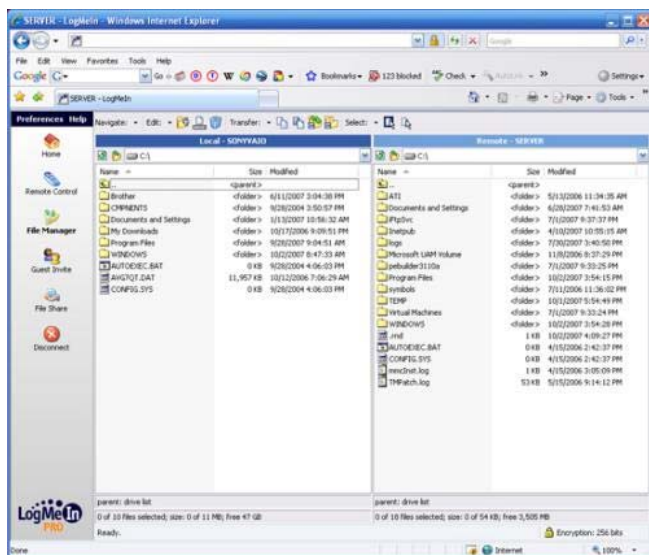
Guest Invite

Using LogMeIn Pro's Guest Invite feature, LogMeIn Pro subscribers can invite specific individuals to temporarily access the PC or server's desktop. Note that, for this feature to work, the user must be seated at the host system.

File Manager

Selecting File Manager opens a new LogMeIn Pro window. That window features two columns, one for the current system and a second window listing the remote system's files and folders. Exchanging files between the two systems is as simple as dragging-and-dropping the files between the two windows. (**Figure K**)

Figure K



LogMeIn Pro's File Manager makes quick work of remotely exchanging files between two systems.

File Share

LogMeIn Pro's File Share feature enables sharing files with specific contacts. The feature works by creating a secure link to files on the remote system. That secure link can then be shared with contacts with whom you wish to share files. In addition to creating the secure link, LogMeIn Pro users can specify users receive a specific number of downloads or provide a specific timeframe within which the files must be accessed.

Preferences

Using the Preferences menu, users can customize Remote Control sessions, Security Settings, Network Settings, Log Settings, Reboot Options and Advanced Options. (Figure L)

Among the Remote Control session settings that can be customized are general settings (such as enabling guest invitations), security (such as disabling host keyboard and mouse, blanking the host's monitor and locking the console if the session is broken), visible and audible notification (alarm beeps for alerting the user when remote control sessions start or end), interactive user's permission (such as requiring a remote user to approve the remote connection request), remote printing and drive connection. Simple checkboxes are provided for enabling (or disabling) each clearly listed feature.

Security Settings that can be customized include access controls (defining or editing user-specific permissions), changing the Windows system password, preventing specific IP addresses from connecting to the host, filtering IP addresses, logs, SSL setup, personal passwords and more.

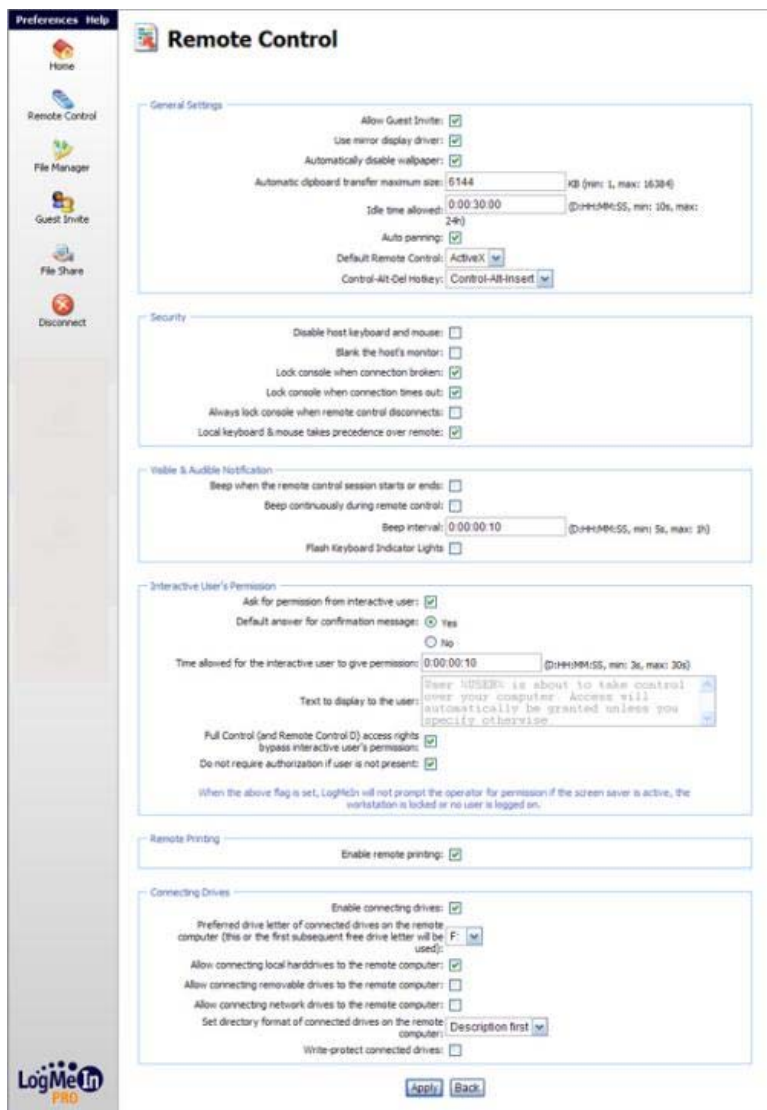
File transfer limits, bandwidth restrictions and idle time settings are configured from within Network Settings, as are proxy settings.

Among the Log Settings that can be configured are the number of days for which log files should be kept, system log parameters (for sending log files to a Syslog server) and remote control recording (LogMeIn Pro can create video files of remote sessions).

From the Reboot menu, users can opt to restart the LogMeIn session. Users can also choose to reboot the remote system normally. Should a program have locked up, users also have a hard reboot option (and even an emergency reboot alternative) available in which Windows isn't permitted to gracefully shut down. Instead, these reboots force Windows to restart as if the reset button were physically depressed on the front of the remote host computer. Further reboot options include a safe-mode reboot (in which Windows starts in Safe Mode with Networking Enabled) and a reboot scheduled for a specific time.

Advanced Options available to LogMeIn Pro users include disabling HTML-based remote control, disabling HTML content compression and customizing specific log on messages. The default language settings are also configured from within the Advanced Options menu.

Figure L



LogMeIn enables users to customize numerous session settings.

Help

From the Help menu, LogMeIn provides a Getting Started guide designed to quickly bring new users up to speed using the remote connectivity software. There's also an online user manual, as well as more information on the software license. Customer support and feedback links are also provided within the application's Help menu.

An effective investment

LogMeIn provides a solid and reliable tool for solving remote connectivity issues. Further, the software solves the infamous problem of trying to print remote data on a local system.

While the software is designed, by default, to deliver a potent remote connectivity solution, knowing how to access the application's advanced features make any investment in the utility that much more effective.

Additional resources

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- Sign up for TechRepublic's [Downloads Weekly Update](#) newsletter
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