

## DISABLE AUTOMATIC SHARE AND PRINT DISCOVERY (WINDOWS XP)

**Windows XP** automatically searches the network for shares and printers upon connecting to the network. This is probably useful in a SOHO (**s**mall **o**ffice **h**ome **o**ffice) or home network but not the enterprise. To disable **XP automatic discovery**:

- In Explorer, click **Tools**;
- Click Folder Options;
- Click the **View** tab;
- Uncheck **Automatically Search for Network Folders and Printers** in **Advanced** settings list.

It is important to disable this setting in Windows XP because it is the basis of a serious security flaw in XP. When you click **My Network Places**, your logon password may be transmitted automatically to numerous unspecified computers on the LAN.

**Windows XP** tries to acquire the shared resources list of all computers on the **LAN**. At that time, the user's local logon password is used when the password for the shared resource is not known. Your PC transmits the LMhash version of your password.

If there are **NT4.0** or any other **pre-Windows 2000** PCs on the **LAN**, XP will transmit your password to the pre-Windows 2000 PCs during its share and print search. It transmits the LM hash which is significantly weaker than XP or Windows 2000 hashes. In order to protect the **LM hash**, XP has a registry value:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\Lsa\NoLMHash
```

which if set to 1 will prevent XP or Windows 2000 from generating the **LM hash**. **Pwdump** will not be able to acquire the LM hash, which is a good thing.

Sadly, **NoLMHash** does not affect LM authentication. Even if **NoLMHash** has been set, XP will still transmit the LM hash to a NT4.0 machine when **My Network Places** is clicked.