

No. 266: AnyDesk – A Teamviewer Alternate

Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR, 715 N. Dries Street, Saukville, WI 53080-1664
(262) 268-1949 wb9rqr@att.net

Over the years, Teamviewer has been a wonderful, free tool. It has allowed me to fix remote computer software for a number of friends (even those out of state), as well as saving the need, many hundreds of times, for me to run up and down the stairs from basement-located ham and Winlink computers to the 2nd floor main computer (or the reverse). That is important when you are 84 (28 April).

Right now, I have 11 computers on my Teamviewer list (really only 9 because two are dual-boot — Windows-Linux), and Teamviewer starts up with either operating system. I own seven (really five with the two dual-boot) that are located in my home, but the remaining four are offsite at friends or relatives houses, and I service them all. For example, when one of my own machines has a Linux update, I make the rounds of all Linux machines because I know the rest of the Linux machines need to be updated, too.

Teamviewer was just peachy for a number of years. But then, perhaps because of their need for revenue, they began to throw in advertising notices to buy their software that were of the *in-your-face* nature. Then they had some secret way to decide you were using their free service for non-free commercial purposes (which I have never done), and they locked me out of using their service. The only way to unlock and resume service was to send them affidavit documentation, on a form that took several days to get from them, with signatures and dates. Furthermore, it took at least another week or even two for them to respond, and sometimes they did not respond at all, but suddenly service was simply resumed. After this happened three times with three different machines, the end user (me) got pretty annoyed. Then I stumbled upon AnyDesk.

AnyDesk is quite similar to Teamviewer, but faster. They claim 12 milliseconds to transfer, for example, your mouse pointer movement to a remote computer, which is really very speedy. And AnyDesk works across platforms, with Windows, macOS and Linux. For example, I routinely control a Windows 10 desktop from a Linux machine, and vice versa. It works with XP and above, has modest RAM requirements (2 gigabytes), and very reasonable video card capability requirements.

So, have I dumped Teamviewer? No. I took the time and trouble to put both programs on all 11 operating systems, and I can pick and choose which one I want to use in a particular situation. Yes, I switch between them. On the other hand, the first time Teamviewer again locks me out, I will remove their software from all machines. Most likely, they don't care. But writing about it as I am doing now, and informing you of alternates, surely cannot help them. I think it pays to be nice to even your "free" customers as an investment in the future.

So, at this point in history, if you need to control a remote computer, be it across the room or across the world, I recommend AnyDesk. Just search for anydesk.com, download it and install it on both machines. It works nicely and the price (\$0) is right! Happy Computing!