

How to network Windows XP with Windows 7

The following document explains how to network a computer running Windows XP with one running Windows 7. This is most likely useful in a home setting in which someone wants to connect a netbook running XP with a desktop running W7. For security reasons, if you're connecting the netbook wirelessly via a wireless router, be sure to use WPA-2 (a.k.a AES) encryption to connect your netbook to your network (WEP is completely useless).

The procedure consists of:

1. Assigning the same workgroup name to both the XP and W7 computers.
2. Creating a password-protected standard-user account on the W7 system.
(This will facilitate the requirement of a username and password from the XP user when connecting to W7. It will also deny the XP user administrator privileges on the W7 machine.)
3. Configuring the network settings on the W7 system to allow network and printer sharing.
4. Choosing which folders on the W7 system to share.
5. Logging into the W7 system from the XP system.

Assigning a Workgroup name in XP

- a) Log in to an administrator account on the XP machine.
- b) Right-click **My Computer** and select **Properties** (Figure 1) to pull up the *System Properties* window (Figure 2).

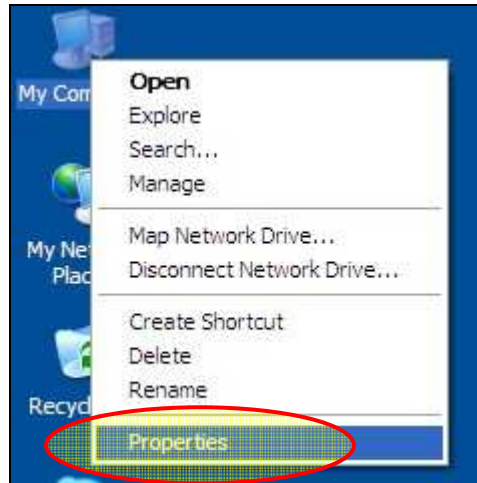


Figure 1: Select Properties on XP.

- c) On the *System Properties* window, select the **Computer Name** tab, and click the **Change** button to assign your workgroup a name (Figure 2).

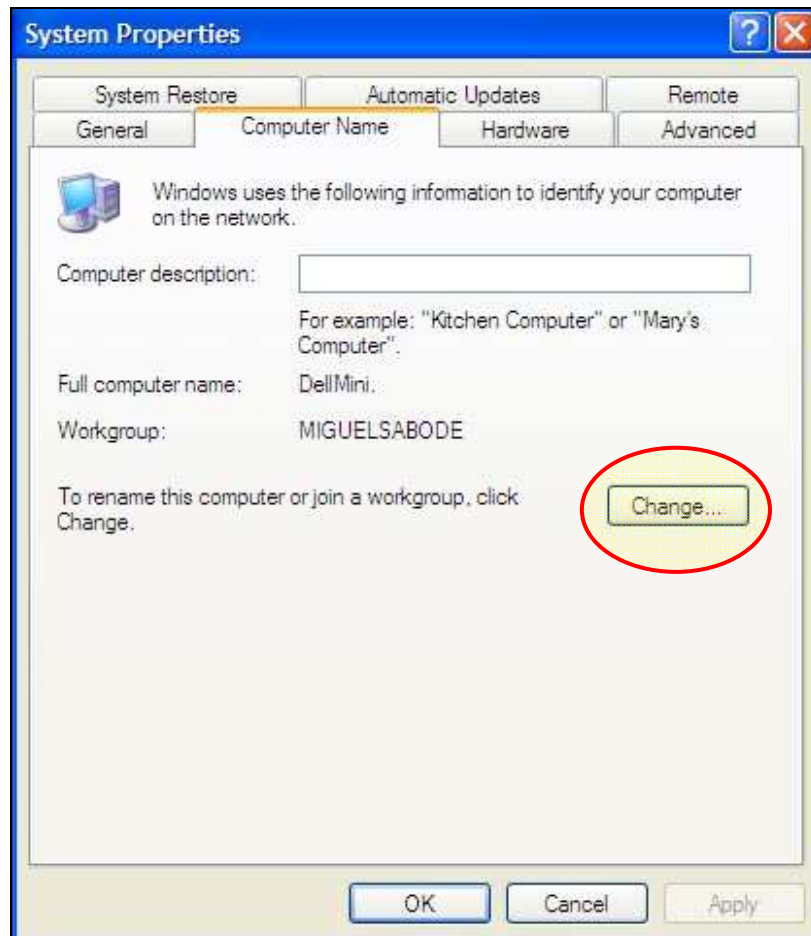


Figure 2: Click the Change button to set the Workgroup in XP.

Assigning a Workgroup name in Windows 7

- d) Log in to an administrator account on the W7 machine.
- e) Right-click **My Computer** and select **Properties** (Figure 3) to pull up the *System* window (Figure 4).

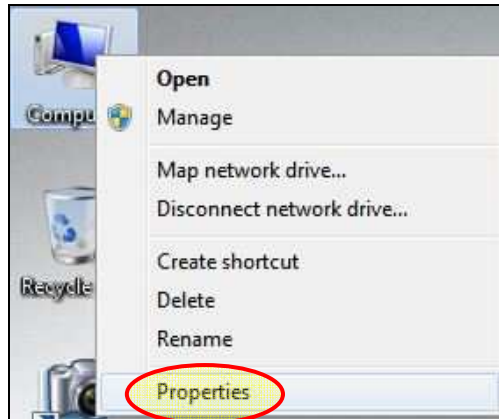


Figure 3: Select Properties on W7

- f) On the System window, click **Change Settings** under the *Computer name, domain, and workgroup settings* section and assign the same workgroup name as on the XP machine (Figure 4).

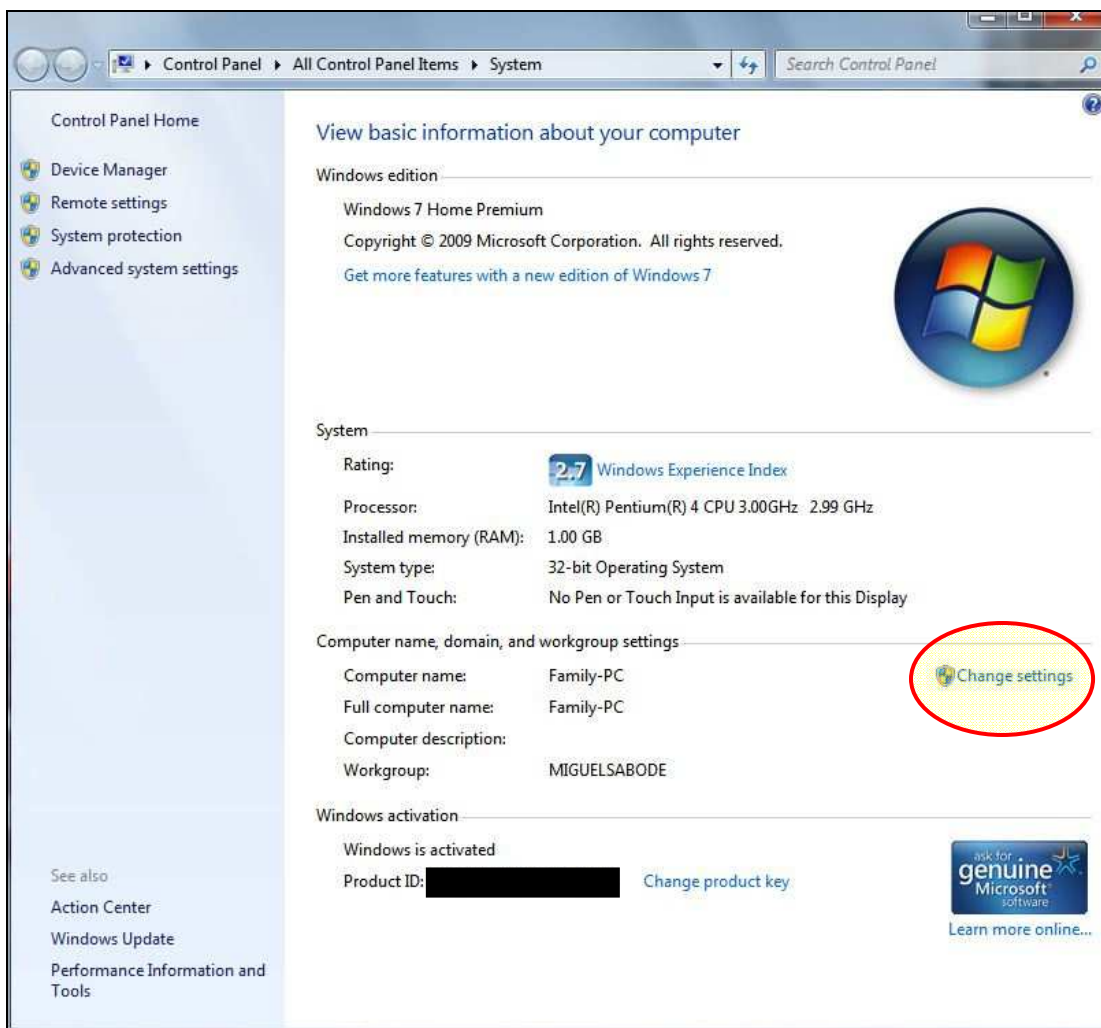


Figure 4: Click Change Settings to set the Workgroup name in W7.

Creating a user account in W7

- a) Next, create a password-protected standard-user account in W7. This will provide an account for a user on the XP computer to use to login to the W7 system. On W7, go to **Control Panel** → **User Accounts** and click **Manage another account** (Figure 5).

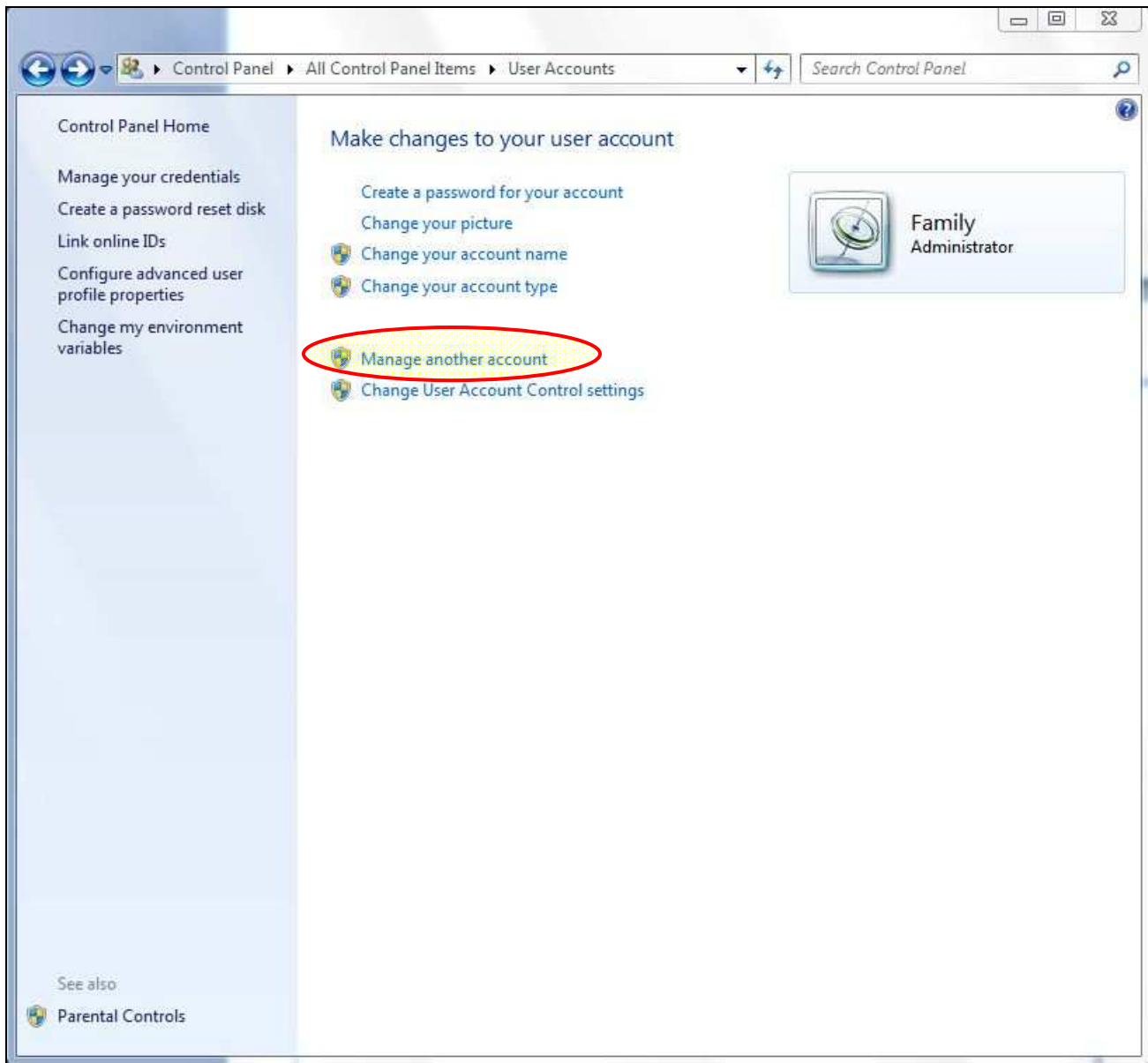


Figure 5: Select Manage accounts in W7 to create another user account.

- b) On the resulting *Manage Accounts* window, click **Create a new account** and create a standard user account. Be sure to assign the account a password. For example, I created an account called muoncapture (Figure 6).

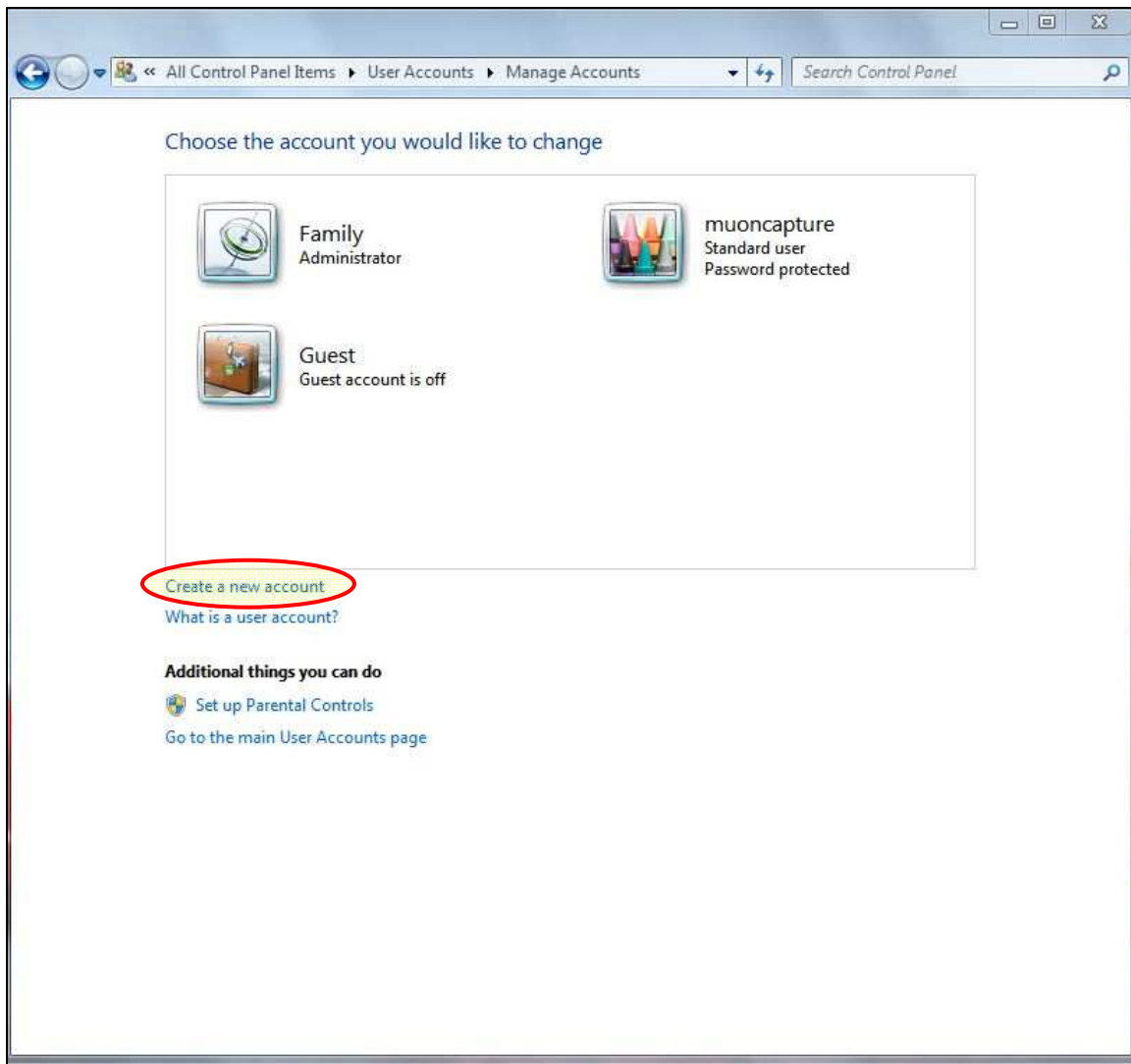


Figure 6: Create a new account in W7 and password protect it.

Configuring Network & Sharing in W7

- a) Go to the **Control Panel** and select **Network and Sharing Center** (Figure 7).

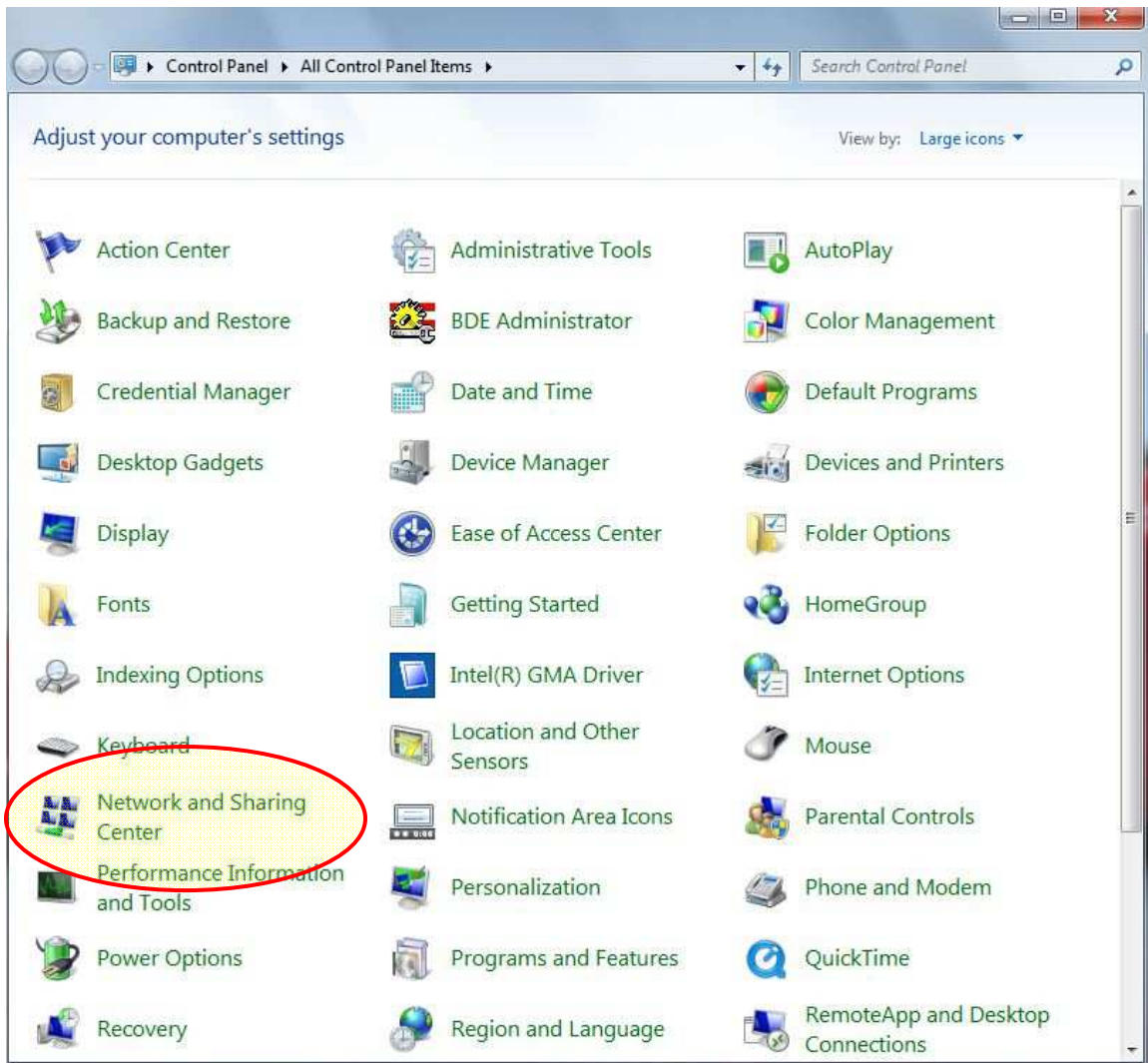


Figure 7: Go to Network and Sharing Center in W7

- b) On the left pane of the *Network and Sharing Center* window (Figure 8), click **Change advanced sharing settings**.

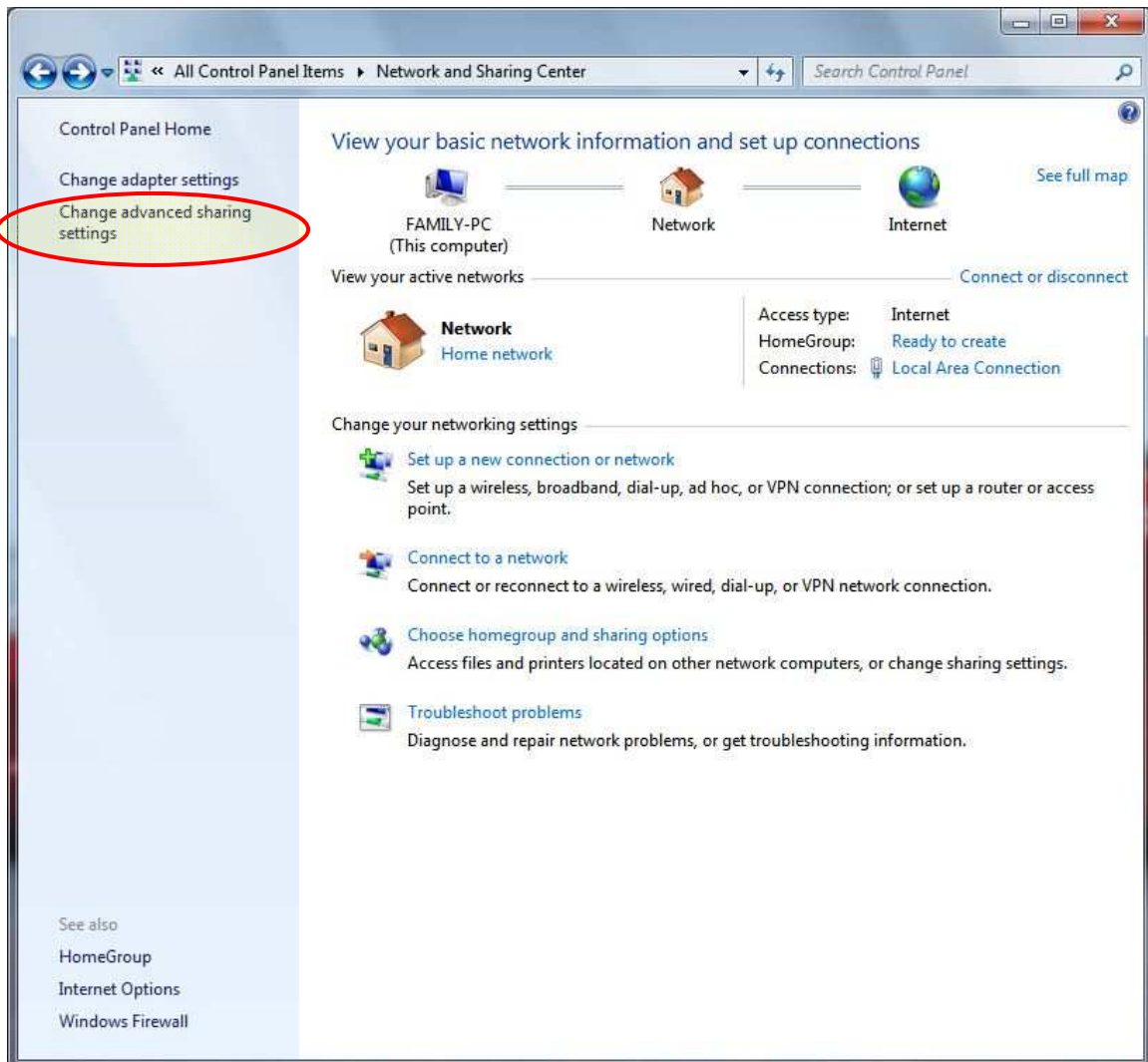


Figure 8: Select Change advanced sharing settings to configure the network on W7.

- c) On the *Advanced sharing settings* (Figure 9) window, there are two groups of settings to configure: *Home or Work* and *Public*. In Windows, each user account has its own set of folders for My Documents, My Pictures, My Music, etc. In W7, there is also a set of ‘public’ folders: Public Documents, Public Pictures, Public Music, etc. These ‘public’ folders are meant to be a shared repository of data that can be shared with all user accounts on the computer. You need to configure the *Home or Work* settings separately from the *Public* settings. I did not want to use the ‘public’ folders, so I turned that functionality off.

I set the following **Advanced sharing settings**:

i. Home or Work (current profile)

- Network Discovery: **on**
- File and printer sharing: **on**
- Public folder sharing: **off**
- Media streaming: N/A
- File sharing connections: 128-bit encryption
- Password protected sharing: **on**

ii. Public

- Network Discovery: **off**
- File and printer sharing: **off**
- Public folder sharing: **off**
- Media streaming: N/A
- File sharing connections: 128-bit encryption
- Password protected sharing: **off**

Once finished with these settings, click the **Save Changes** button at the bottom of the **Advanced sharing settings** window.

With this configuration I am not using the ‘public’ repository of folders, but will choose which folders I want to share later. I am also requiring that a user of the XP computer provide a user name and password to connect to the W7 system (more on that in a bit).

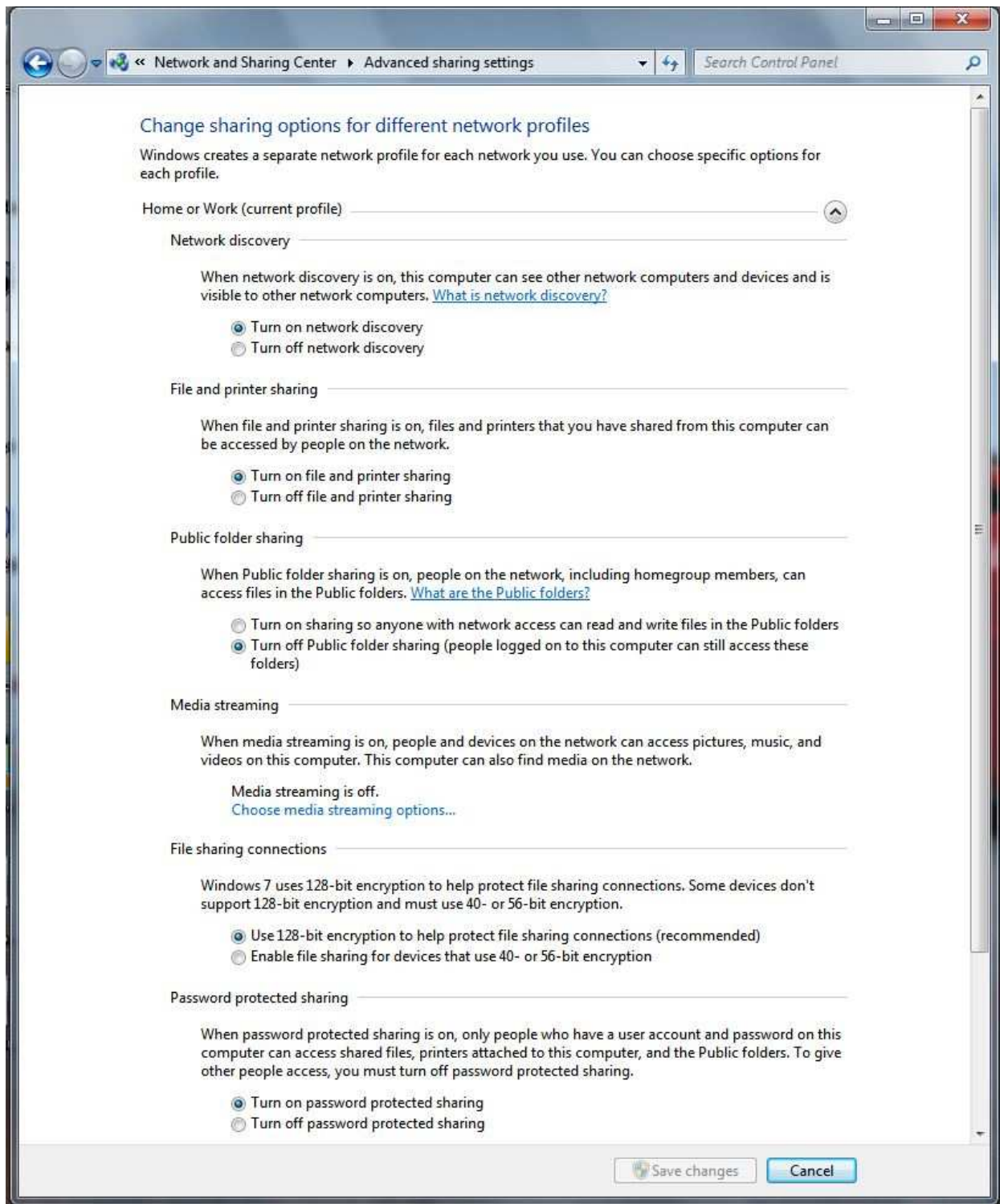


Figure 9: Setup network and sharing settings

Sharing a folder in Windows 7

- a) While still logged in to the administrator account on the W7 machine, right-click any folder that you want to share, hover over **Share with** and then click **Specific people...** (Figure 10).

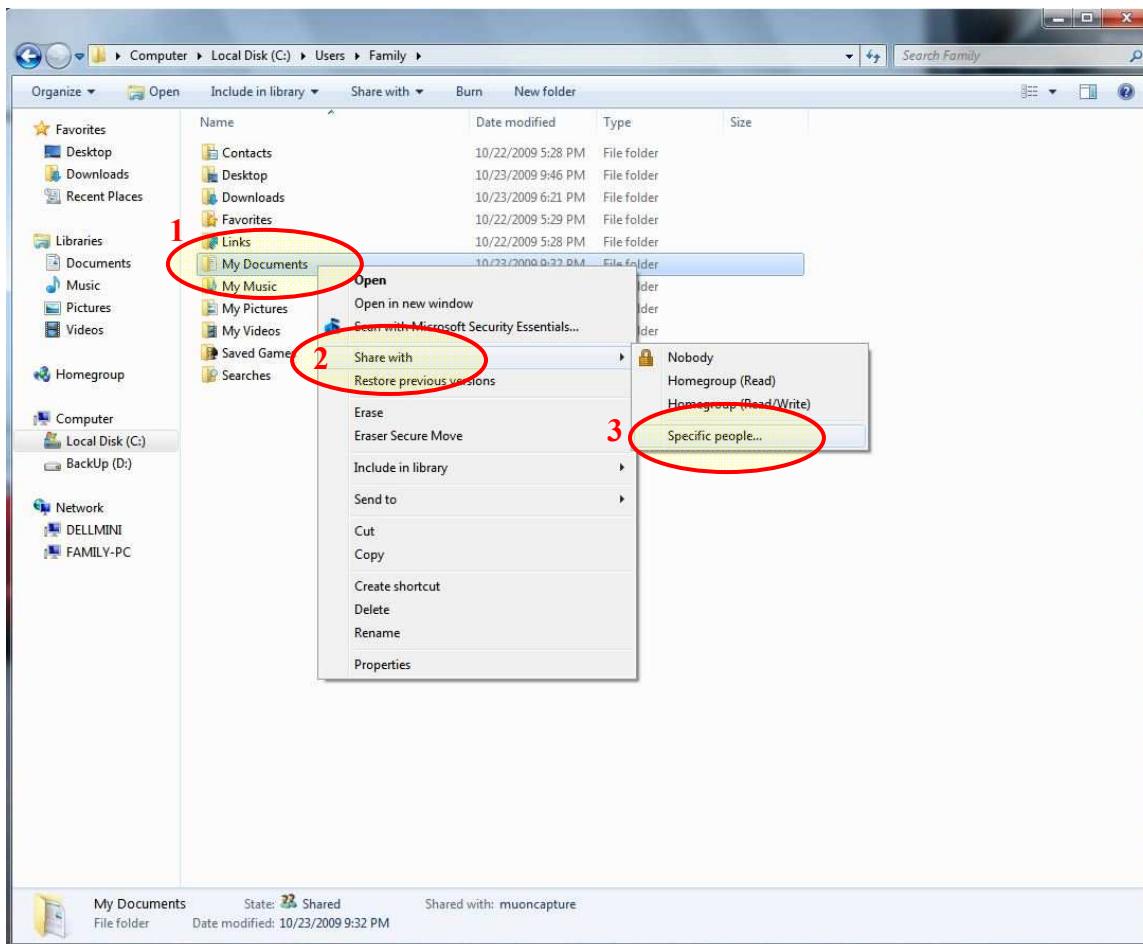


Figure 10: Choose folders to share on the network. For example, I am going to share my entire W7 My Documents folder.

- b) Choose to share the folder with the password protected user that was created earlier. (Again, muoncapture in my case. See Figure 11).

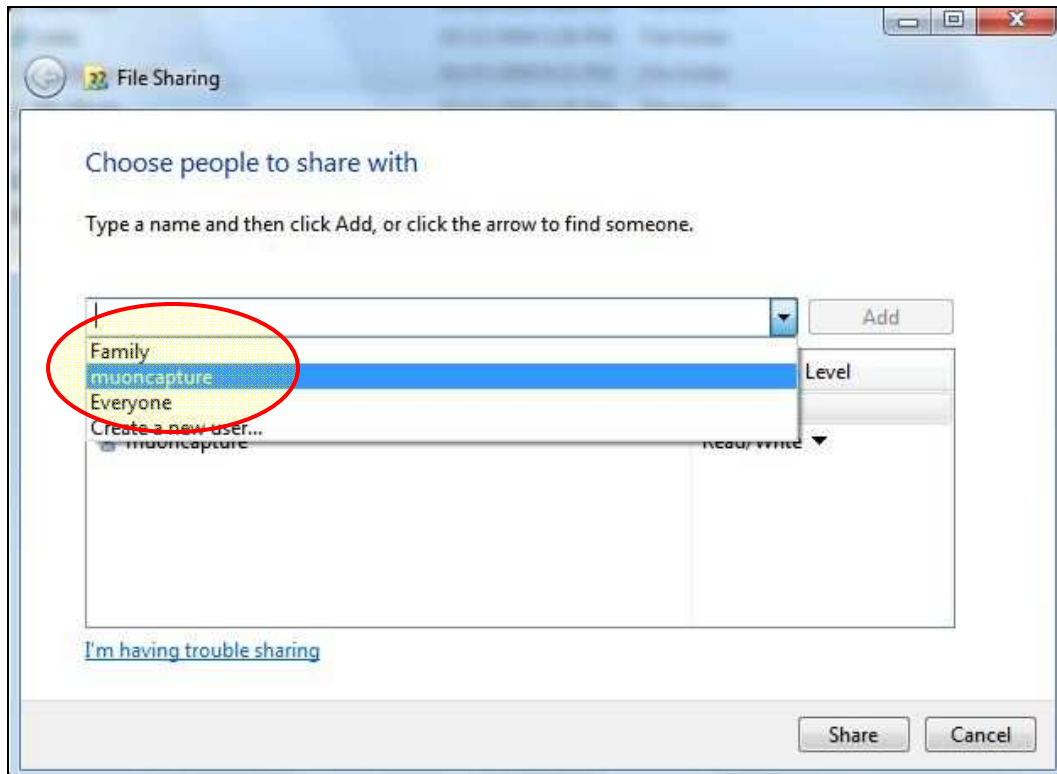


Figure 11: Choose the user previously created to share the folder with.

- c) Assign either **Read** or **Read/Write** privileges for the folder and click the **Share** button (Figure 12).

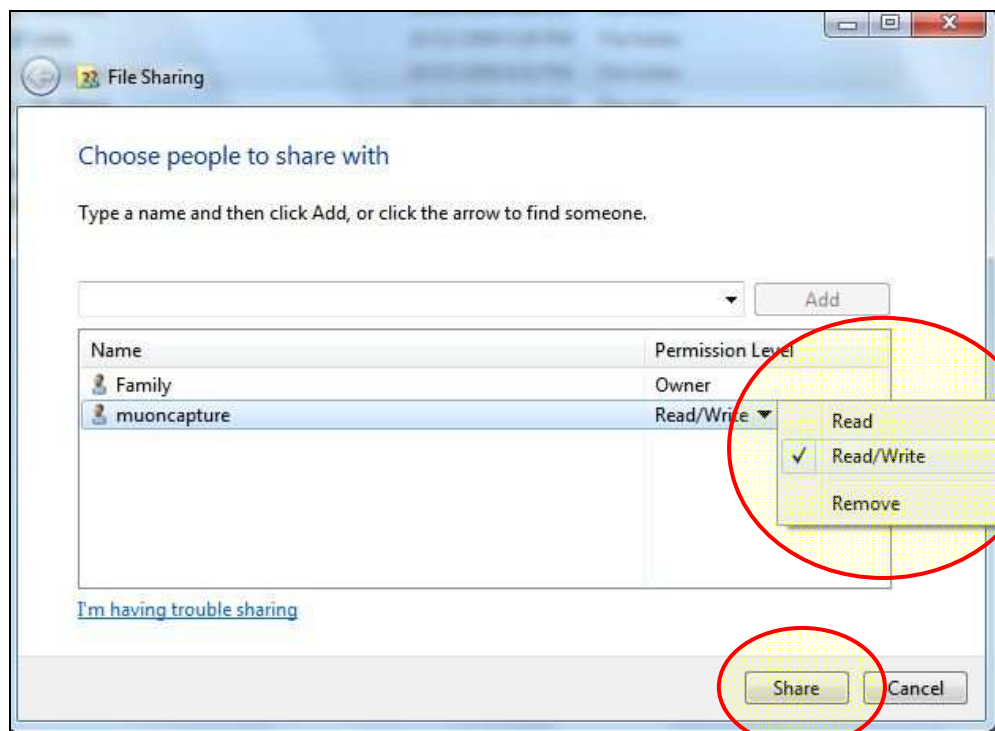


Figure 12: Set the folder permissions.

Connecting XP to the shared W7 folder.

- a) Now, back on the XP machine, map the remote W7 folder that is being shared as a network hard drive. To do this, right-click on **My Computer** and click **Map Network Drive...**(Figure 13).

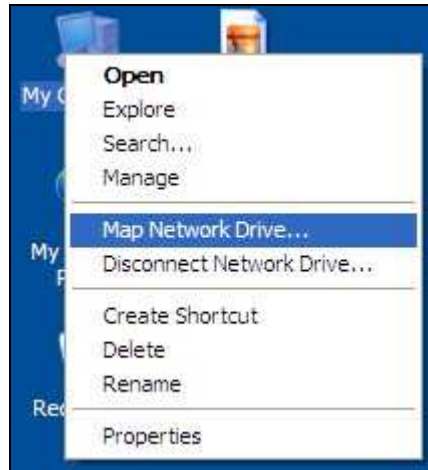


Figure 13: Right-click My Computer in XP and choose Map Network Drive...

- b) On the resulting *Map Network Drive* window (Figure 14), pick an unused drive letter, click the **Browse** button, and browse to the W7 folder that you want to connect to. Click the Finish button when you're...um, finished.

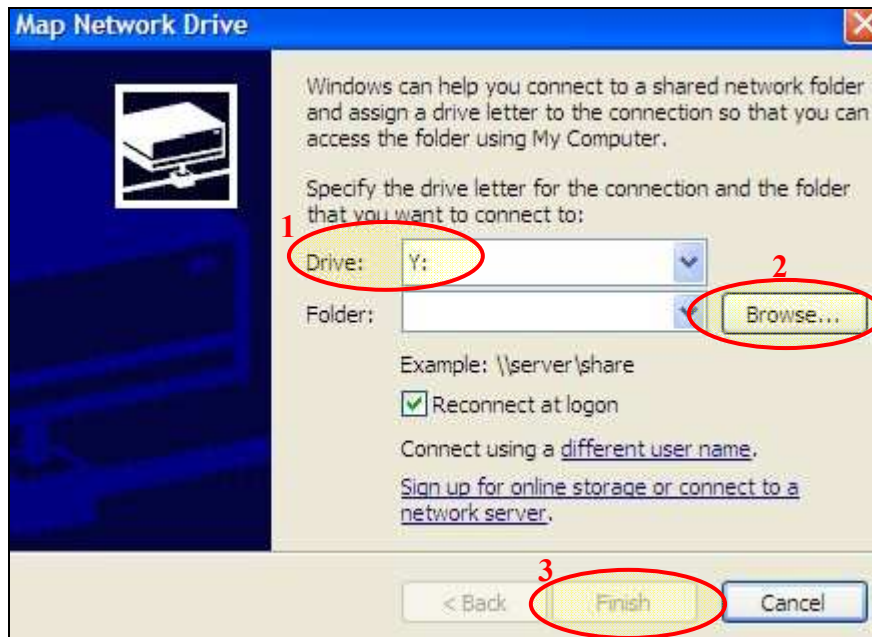


Figure 14: From XP, assign a drive letter to your remote W7 folder.

- c) Now you have a network drive on the XP system (Z: for example) that maps to the shared W7 folder (Figure 15). Double-click the network drive to connect to it.

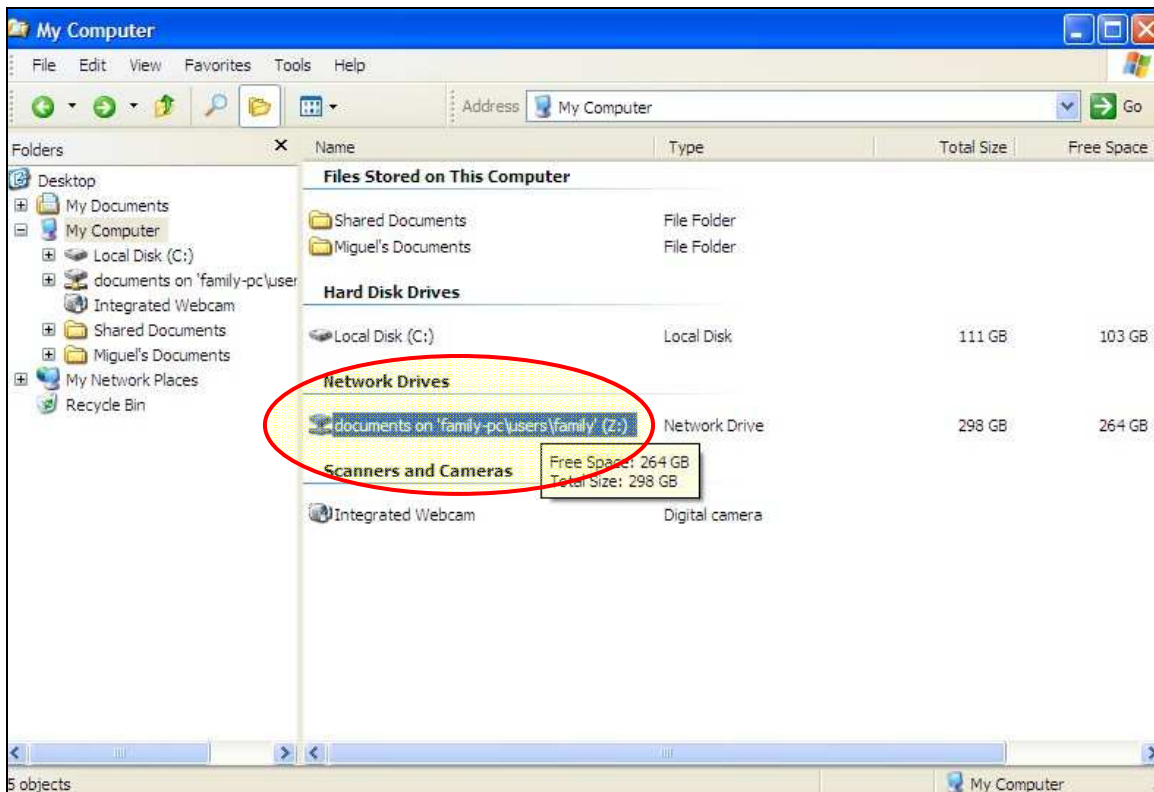


Figure 15: Double-click the mapped network drive just like any hard drive. In this example, drive Z: maps to the My Documents folder on the W7 system.

- d) When you try to open the mapped drive you'll be prompted for a username and password. Use the W7 standard user account user name and password that was created earlier and click OK (Figure 16).



Figure 16: Provide the user name and password of the W7 user account created earlier.

Now wasn't that easy? 😊