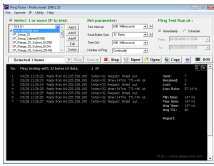


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By: Daniela Olariu, Windows Editor



Ping Tester Professional

[Ping Tester Professional - See Your Network](#)

Equally useful for home and corporate network administration

Networking is now an integral part of the computing experience that most users enjoy, or not, on a daily basis. Ranging in size and complexity from a few PCs in most homes and offices and going up to hundreds and even thousands of workstations when it comes to corporate and enterprise environments, networks are now the highways of data transfers and they link computers all over the world together. Sometimes, and maybe all too often, things are not as they should be and it's up to the network administrator to deal with the problem as swiftly and efficiently as possible. This is where software applications like PingTesterPro come into action as they enable a network administrator to quickly find non-responsive and disconnected computers as well as detect a host of other things, like network speed and load. Just as its name suggests, PingTesterPro is mainly concerned with pinging a range of network IP addresses and displaying relevant information about the interrogated computer systems, but it can also perform a host of other functions like viewing the network topology, creating reports as well as enabling or disabling some basic network settings. PingTesterPro presents to its users a main application window that is split in two distinct areas, one dedicated to user interaction and one mainly concerned with displaying relevant data about the performed tasks and their results. The menu system is cleanly cut and it offers just the needed components and options, being very easy to use and understand even for a novice. Five entries are marked in the menu system: File, Operate, IP, Utility and Help. While "Help" is pretty self explanatory and sends the user to a well structured documentation system, the other menus are more important so we will insist on them. The "File" menu offers the possibility to both import and export a list of IP addresses, which can be stored in either text or CSV formats. These options are most useful for network administration, when scanning the network from different machines is necessary and it saves the user the need to manually enter all addresses. As this application can display a DOS-style command window, for those network administrators that are fond of the console, the export and import options for command histories come naturally. Since Windows provides users with the possibility to ping a specific IP address, one might ask himself why would there be necessary to install a different application for the same purpose. The answer is quite simple: PingTesterPro includes a host of advanced features that are not available in the basic Windows implementation of ping. First of all, users have the possibility to select more than one IP address and store the created list, thus increasing the efficiency when interrogating the network by not having to type the same IP over and over again. Secondly, users can configure the ping command according to their own needs by setting the parameters to values they find most appropriate. PingTesterPro enables users to modify the test interval, send buffer size and number of packets, allowing a custom interrogation of the network. Both the Windows and the Linux implementations of the "ping" program are quite customizable, but instead of working from the much "dreaded" command line, users that choose a software application like PingTesterPro are greeted by a graphical user interface that significantly simplifies things, as much of the work is done with just a few mouse clicks. After all the network parameters are set to their proper values, clicking on the Ping button located right underneath instructs PingTesterPro to immediately send an ICMP (Internet Control Message Protocol) "echo request" to the target host and listen for ICMP "echo response" replies. The application displays a statistical summary including the estimated round-trip time in milliseconds and any packet loss by comparing the number of packets sent with those received. After finishing the test, PingTesterPro allows the user to read a detailed report of the entire procedure. The statistical data can be grouped by time

period as well as by sent buffer size, thus allowing an accurate and real-time analysis of the network. The report can be exported as text or CSV format, allowing network administrators to build up in time a list of potential trouble spots. Another useful feature of PingTesterPro is that it supports scheduled network testing, useful especially in situations when the network needs to be constantly monitored for disconnected computers or when the network is expected to meet a high uptime level. Moving along further we find the Scan IP feature, which enables users to locate hosts that are no longer active in the network, as a ping command will fail when sent to those machines. For large number of hosts that need to be scanned and for networks that stretch over several layers of routers and switches, PingTesterPro's users can also interrupt an ongoing scan. This option is most useful for networks where most of the computer systems are running with integrated firewalls that might block all ICMP traffic, thus "absorbing" ping packets and making traditional ping programs enter an infinite(or long) cycle of queries. Last but not least, we find the Utility menu, which includes an extremely useful feature implemented by PingTesterPro, named DOS Commands. As the name itself suggests, PingTesterPro allows you to run all network-related DOS commands, including tracert, netstat, ipconfig, attrib and others. Simply select the desired command and IP, click on the Run button and PingTesterPro will immediately perform the specified action. Another nice to have feature that is included in this software utility is the fact that it comes by default with a list of well known Internet hosts like google.com and yahoo.com and thus making easier to determine if the problem with a particular networking environment is linked to the upstream or with the downstream traffic.

The Good PingTesterPro comes together with all the basic functions that administrators need to monitor a given network. It is also easy to use and highly customizable. The generated reports provide users with a detailed and real-time state of the entire network, down to every machine.

The Bad The almost \$200 that need to be paid for the license might seem a little too much, especially if we take into consideration other applications that provide the same basic functionality. When pinging a certain IP address, there are other important parameters which are not even "mentioned" in PingTesterPro , such as offset, flag and packet checksum. Allowing users to customize them will certainly increase the application's usefulness.

The Truth PingTesterPro does a pretty good job when it comes to interrogating a certain network and includes more than the basic functionality needed by an administrator. While it lacks some more advanced functions that are needed to perform in-depth scans and analyses over a network environment, PingTesterPro comes with enough functionality under its hood to make a good job in the hands of a casual network administrator, even if the "pros" might dismiss it as incomplete and switch back to the dedicated tools that come with just any Linux distro. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*