

Autostart RCForb (Server) on a Computer Re-Boot

Recover from Power Failure and Autostart Your RemoteHams RCForb Server!

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Introduction

I have been using the RCForb Server developed by Remote Hams (www.remotehams.com) but have been concerned with recovering from a power failure. It is important to be able to recover since the radio server is located at a remote site that would be unmanned. This tech note discusses the files needed on a WIN7 or WIN10 O/S to reboot RCForb Server software.

Disable Software Not Needed

Look at your Windows O/S **Startup** menu and see what is being loaded. Remove any software that is not needed to reduce the chance it might pop up a dialog box and no human is there to close the box.

Remove automatic features in Windows such as auto updates and virus updates. You should still perform updates when you are at the RCForb Server site to have the latest protection but don't allow it during remote ops.

Batch File at Boot

A batch file is needed to run a series of commands that will be invoked during the O/S boot process. The batch file is first needs to verify there is an internet connection prior to starting RCForb Server. Otherwise errors will be created, keeping the software from booting.

Create or copy the batch file below to a file with extension appropriate for a batch file (with extension **.bat**)

Filename:

autostart_RCForb_Server.bat

Contents of File:

```
rem Batch File to Autostart RCForb Server Program
rem Choose the O/S version you are using
rem Remove the remark (rem) just prior to the text you want to select
rem
rem This next line is for 32-bit O/S computers (remove rem prior to the next line if chosen)
rem cd \"Program Files\KG6YPI\RCForb\Server\"
rem
rem This next line is for 64-bit O/S computers (remove rem prior to the next line if chosen)
rem cd\"Program Files (x86)\KG6YPI\RCForb\Server\"
ping -n 15 google.com
start "" rforb.exe
```

Place this file in the **Startup** directory of the Windows O/S, located at path (Win7 example):

C:\Users**YourUserNameHere**\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\Startup

YourUserNameHere is the username that is logged onto the computer where the RCForb Server program is located.

Dynamic IP Address

If the computer hosting the RCForb Server program has a router on the internet with dynamic IP addressing, the IP address will change frequently. To make certain the RCForb Server program knows the current IP address, a feature in RCForb Server can be used to invoke an IP tracker program. Another technical note (*Use a Free Dynamic DNS Service with RCForb*) addresses using a free program, such as No-IP, to dynamically track the IP being used. If No-IP is used, a small piece of software must reside on the server to notify the No-IP organization of the currently used IP address. The software filename that must be loaded for No-IP to track is called **DUCSetup_v4_1_1.exe**. It is important to use a program to track the IP since it will change and if you are not present at the server site when it does, you will eventually be unable to find the IP location of your radio server.

Reserve Your Internal Network Address

You will need to setup your router to assign a reserved address to the computer that is hosting the Remote Hams server software. In my Netgear router, this was found under the LAN tab and then LAN Setup selection. Find the computer's internal IP address and reserve this address so it does not change. The actual menu items to do this will vary between routers so you may have to refer to your user manual.

Valuable Lessons

Here is a brief summary:

1. When using a remote base radio, expect the unexpected. Look at all failures that could occur and plan that they will. Some examples are:
 - Power loss to the Windows PC where RCForb Server is located,
 - Power interruption for a UPS power battery that goes down during power events and does not allow recovery,
 - Software updates and virus scanning software that might be invoked, and
 - Other software that might run, such as updates, that require a human keyboard entry to get past a dialog window.
2. Install dynamic IP tracking software (example No-IP software) on the server computer.
3. Reserve the internal network addresses associated with host computer so they do not get reassigned during router reboots.

Internet Link References and Credits

1. RCForb_Server
<http://download.remotehams.com/>
2. Windows 10 Start-up of RCForb server, by W8RJ -- Solution Credit
<http://www.remotehams.com/forums/index.php/topic,1518.msg6493.html#msg6493>