

GENOVATION

17741 Mitchell North, Irvine, CA 92614 USA
Tel: 949-833-3355 Fax: 949-833-0322
<http://www.genovation.com>
support@genovation.com

Windows 7 XP Mode Application Note



Using a MiniTerm with Legacy Software on Windows 7

This application note describes a scenario where you need to use a USB MiniTerm with some legacy software that is not compatible with Windows 7. The solution involves configuring the XP Mode serial ports to work with the Genovation virtual COM ports provided for the USB MiniTerm.

Preface

“The bespoke line-of-business application is a common feature of the corporate world, and a thing that has been instrumental in cementing Windows as the corporate desktop OS standard.”¹

If you are using a legacy/custom Windows application **that you know will not work on Windows 7**, then you can utilize Microsoft’s XP Mode to run the old software. Although Windows 7 does a very good job of providing backward compatibility (and you did actually try to run your old software on Windows 7 didn’t you?), there are a few instances where only a vanilla XP OS will do.

This document is not reference material for using XP Mode, but it does describe how to use a Windows 7 PC to communicate with a USB Miniterm via XP Mode. A true RS-232 serial MiniTerm will also work, of course, but since its installation is simple by comparison, this application note focuses on USB.

It is assumed that the reader is capable of downloading and installing the XP Mode software from Microsoft’s web site.




MiniTerm Install on Windows 7

The first step is to download and install the MiniTerm software on Windows 7. For the time being we will forget about the legacy/custom software you wish to use, forget about XP Mode, and instead focus on getting the Miniterm going on either Windows 7 32-bit or 64-bit. Nothing special needs to be done at this point. This is the typical MiniTerm Windows 7 installation process.

Download the latest MiniTermPro software from the Genovation web site. The software is the same for all MiniTerm models. Here is a link to the page:

<http://www.genovation.com/900.htm#driver>

And this is what you should find there (as of August 2010):

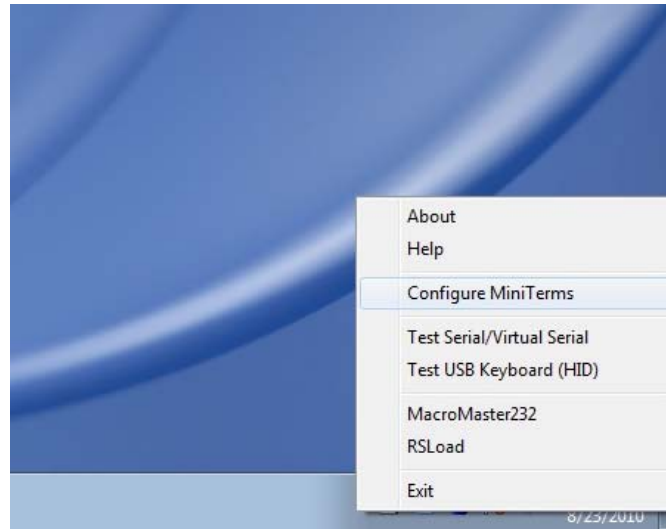
Driver / Software			
File Type	OS Supported	File(s)	File Name
Software (Oct 2009)	Windows 2K/XP, Vista (32-bit)	Download Now	 MiniTermProSetup_v5_41.exe (3 MB)
Software (Oct 2009)	Windows 2K/XP, Vista, Windows 7	Download Now	 MiniTermProSetup_v5_41_w7x64.exe (3 MB)
Release Notes (Oct 2009)	n/a	Download Now	 MiniTermPro.txt (4 KB)

¹ Peter Bright; *Windows 7's XP Mode: what it is, how it works, who it's for*;
<http://arstechnica.com/microsoft/reviews/2010/01/windows-xp-mode.ars>

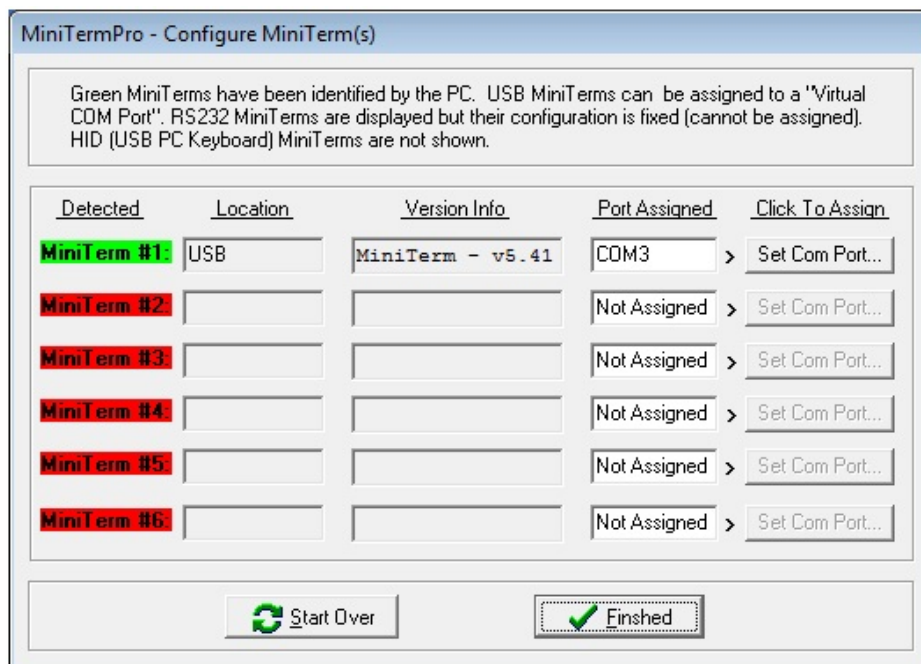
Download and install the version compatible with Windows 7. You should follow along with the instructions in the MiniTerm user manual up to the point where you have tested a connected MiniTerm. We will review only the last few steps here.

Test MiniTerm on Windows 7

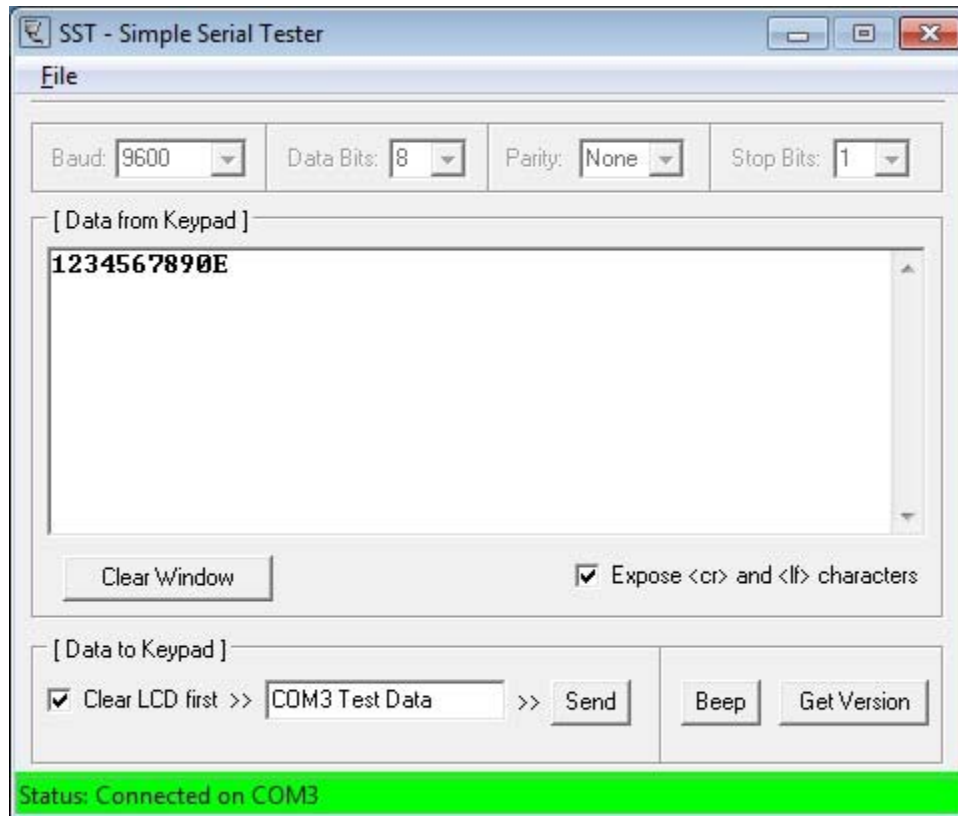
After you have installed MiniTermPro, connect a Miniterm to the PC. Using the MiniTermPro icon in the system tray, open the **Configure MiniTerms** window.



Choose a virtual COM port for the attached MiniTerm by clicking on **Set Com Port**. Wait a moment for the list of ports to appear, and then choose one.



In the above figure, we have selected **COM3**. Click **Finished**. From the system tray again, select **Test Serial/Virtual Serial**. Type some numbers on the MiniTerm and press the Enter key. You should see the numbers on the test program.



Close the test program. Everything up to this point has been the standard installation. We have installed the software and hardware and tested it to make sure that it works on Windows 7.

Install XP Mode

Refer to Microsoft's web site to download and install XP Mode.

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/virtual-pc/download.aspx>

This is a lengthy, multiple-step process.

STEP 3 Download and install Windows XP Mode
Windows XP Mode requires downloading and installing the files below.

Download/install this first:*

Windows XP Mode

Download/install this second:

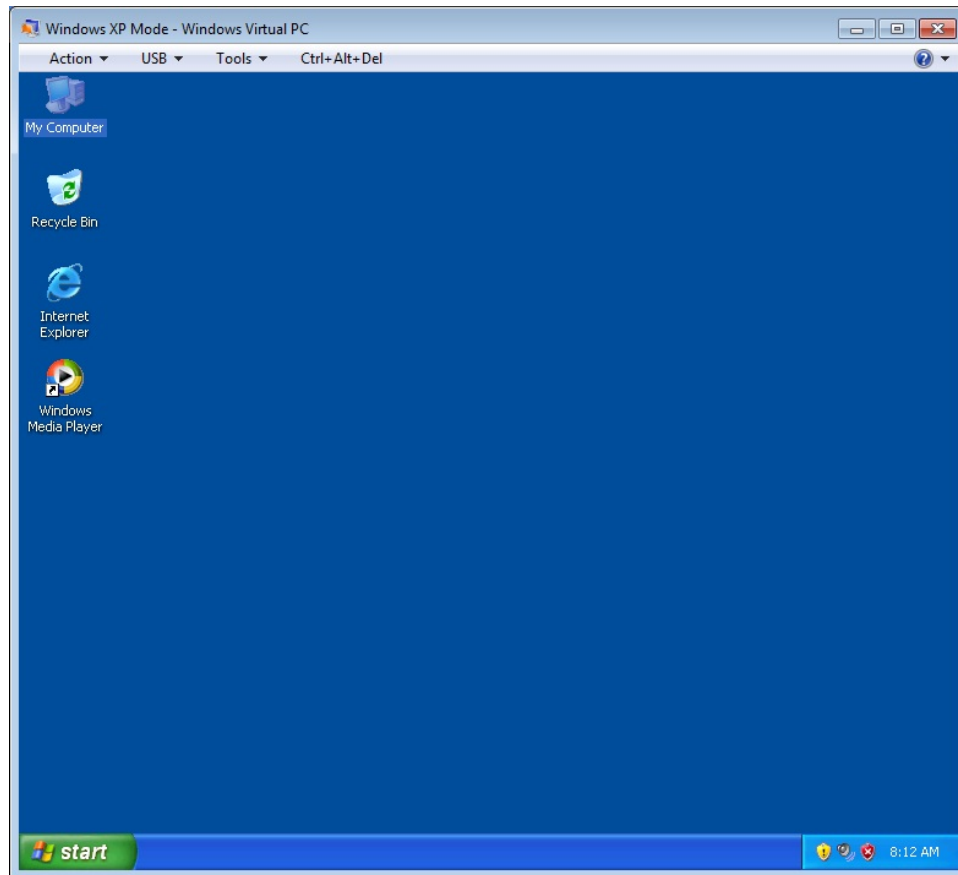
Windows Virtual PC

Download/install this third:**

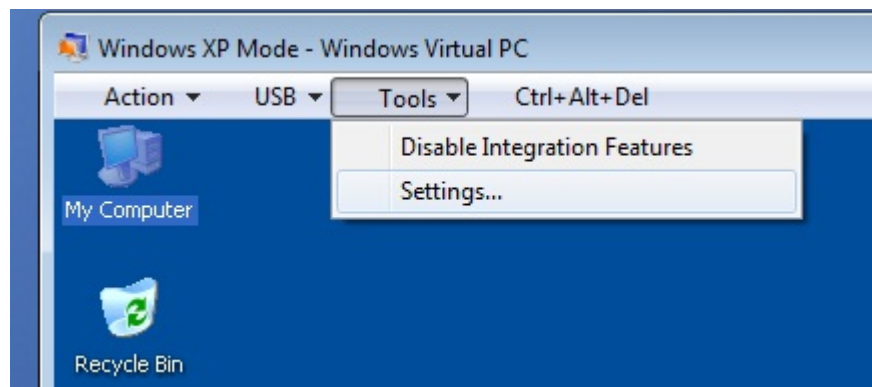
Windows XP Mode update

Configure XP Mode COM Ports

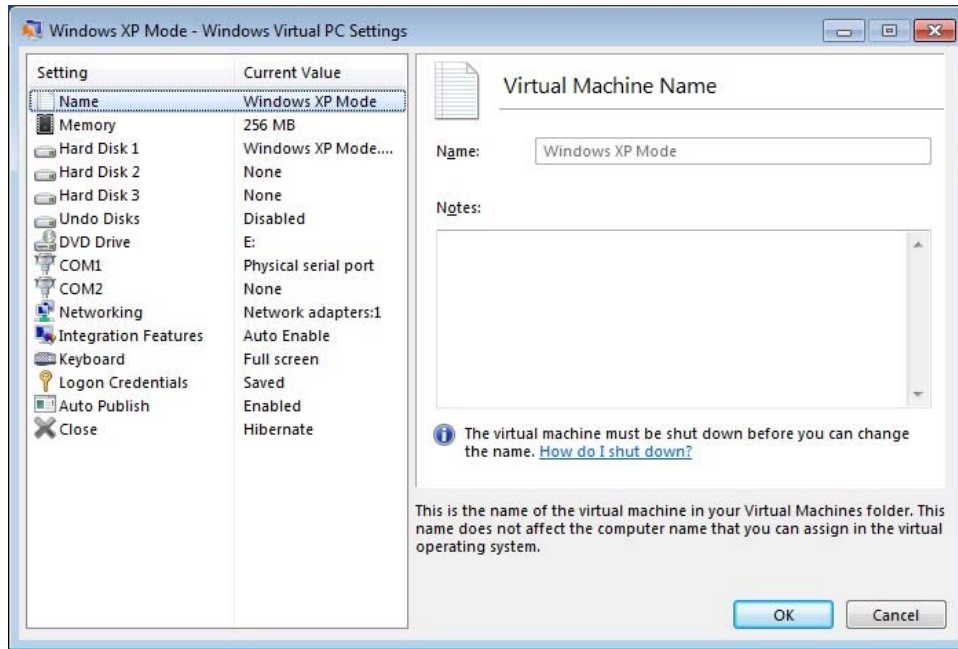
Now on to the part that might get a little confusing. Launch XP Mode. You should see the good old XP desktop in a new window.



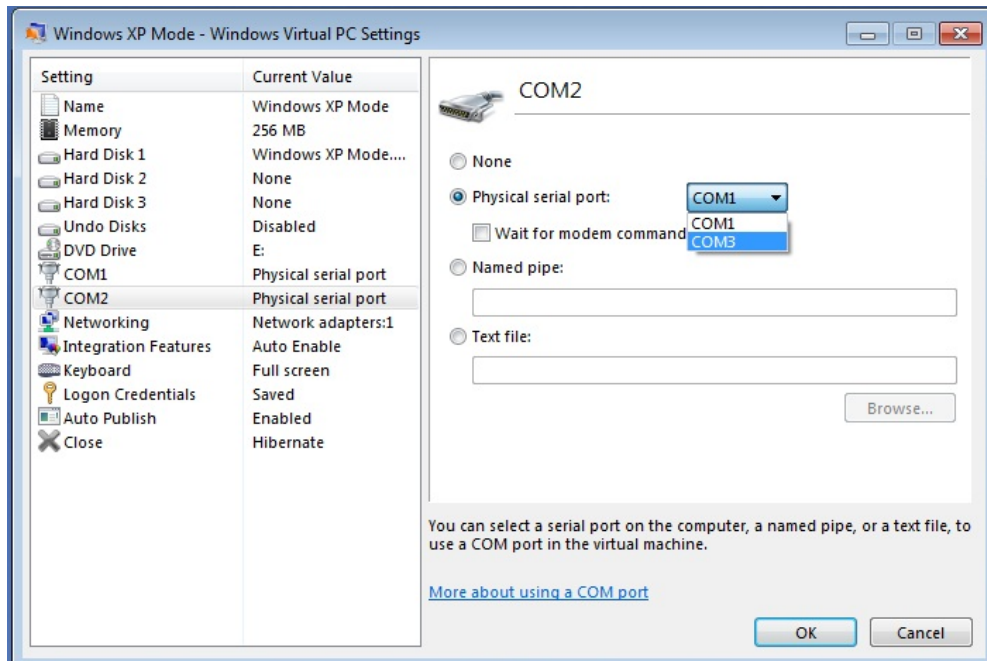
Notice along the top the toolbar containing the words USB and Tools. We are NOT interested in the USB button, but we are interested in the Tools one. Select **Settings** from the Tools drop-down.



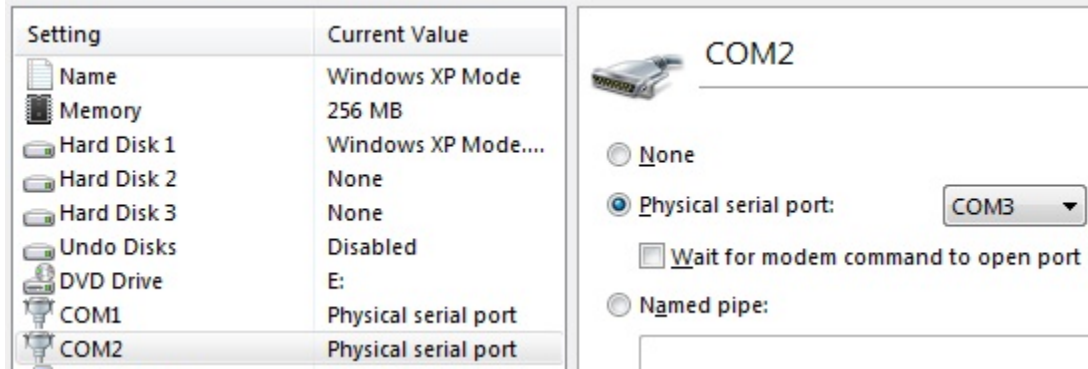
From the Windows Virtual PC Settings window that appears, you can see COM1 and COM2 on the left hand side. Your custom/legacy application will be utilizing one or both of these two COM ports. This is an important point. **Your old software will be talking to the MiniTerm using one of these two XP Mode COM ports.**



If you recall, when we installed the MiniTerm under Windows 7, we assigned it to Windows 7's COM3. What XP Mode allows you to do is attach a Windows 7 Com port to either XP Mode COM1 or XP Mode COM2.



In the above figure we have selected XP Mode's **COM2** on the left hand side. Then on the right hand side, we clicked on **Physical serial port**. To the right of that is a drop down box with two choices in it. COM1 and COM3. **COM3** is our MiniTerm virtual COM port from Windows 7, so we select that.



We have connected XP Mode's COM2 to Windows 7's COM3. Now all that remains is to test our legacy application with COM2.

Test XP Mode Communication

At this point you would install your legacy application in XP Mode if you have not done so already. For the purpose of this application note, we will use XP's built in communications program, HyperTerminal.

From the XP Start menu we select Start, All Programs, Accessories, Communications, Hyperterminal. Create a new connection for COM2 (not COM3!) at 9600 baud. Then we can test the communication with the MiniTerm.

