

Alfa 500mw AWUS036H vs. Gsky 500mw adapter vs. Alfa AWUS036E 50mw adapter

This test was completed by Rokland LLC, online at <http://www.rokland.com>.

We completed a head to head test of the Alfa AWUS036H 500mw USB adapter and the Gsky 500mw adapter. For comparison purposes, we also tested the Alfa AWUS036E, an entry level 50mw USB adapter with antenna connector as well. To keep things simple for the layman, we used the Windows XP utility to show a basic read of how many networks each picked up, and what the rough signal strength was of each. We find this to be better for novice users than Netstumbler readouts where the negative dBm numbers can be confusing. The results below were on par with some testing we did using Netstumbler though.

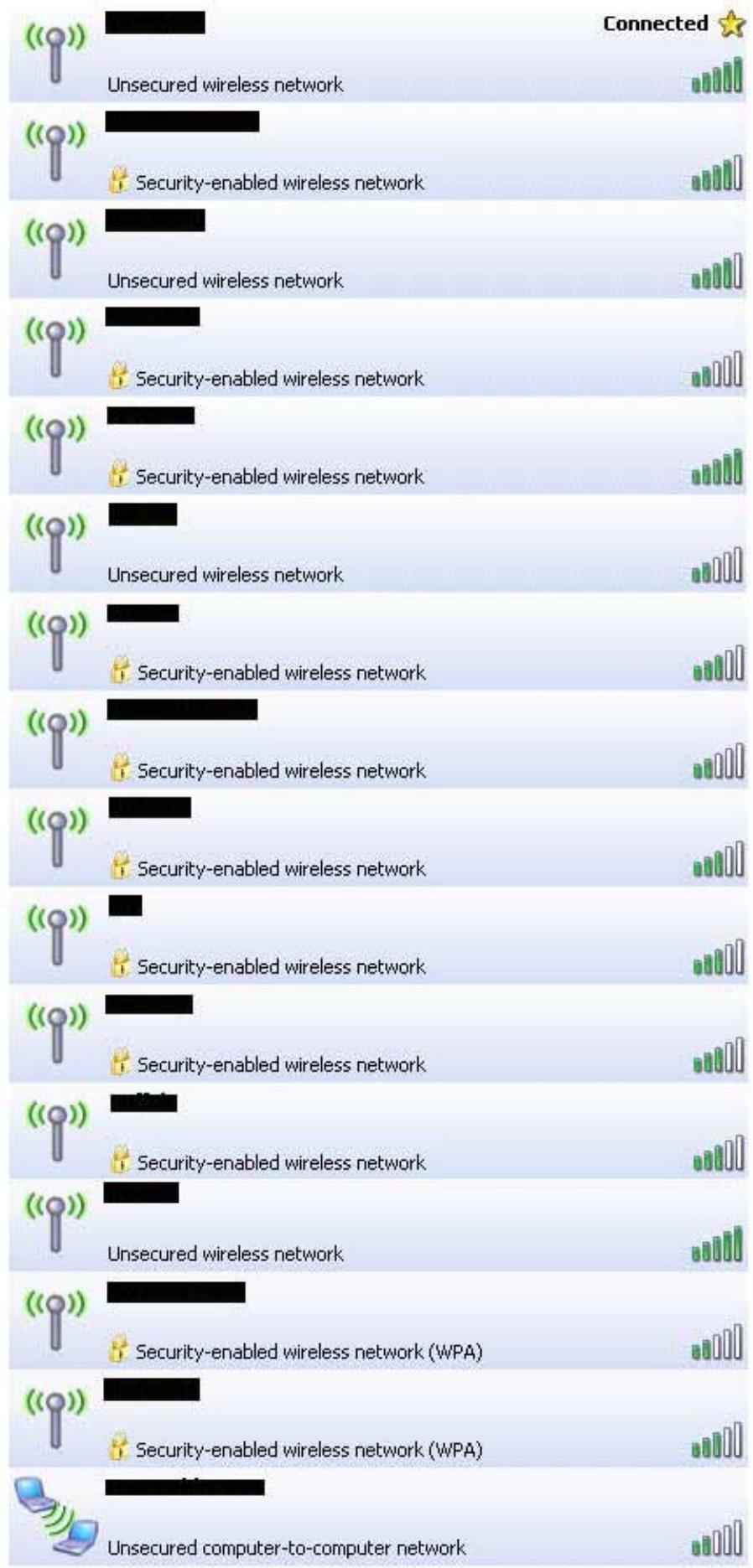
Our testing was done at the same time, with each adapter in the same location, connected to the same 8 dBi gain dipole antenna. Each test ran about two minutes. We tested the Alfa 500mw adapter first, disconnected it from the computer and disconnected the 8 dBi antenna from it, and then connected the antenna to the Gsky and connected the Gsky to the computer. When done testing the Gsky we repeated these steps with the Alfa 50mw adapter. The images you see are from the first test. We ran the same test again to make sure there were no anomalies, and there were not, each adapter picked up the same number of signals and the average signal strength per access point detected was within 1/10 of a point.

Because the Windows XP scanning utility cannot be expanded (meaning you have to scroll to see all the available networks), we had to take multiple screen shots of the utility screen for each adapter and have combined the screenshots for each adapter test together so that there is just one image for each adapter.

The testing begins on the next page- please proceed to page 2. The Alfa 500mw results are on page 2, the Gsky 500mw results are on page 3, the Alfa 50mw results on are page 4, and a conclusion is also on page 4.

Please note that to protect the privacy of owners of the access points detected during the tests, we have blacked out the AP names.

Test 1- Alfa 500mw USB adapter (model AWUS036H)

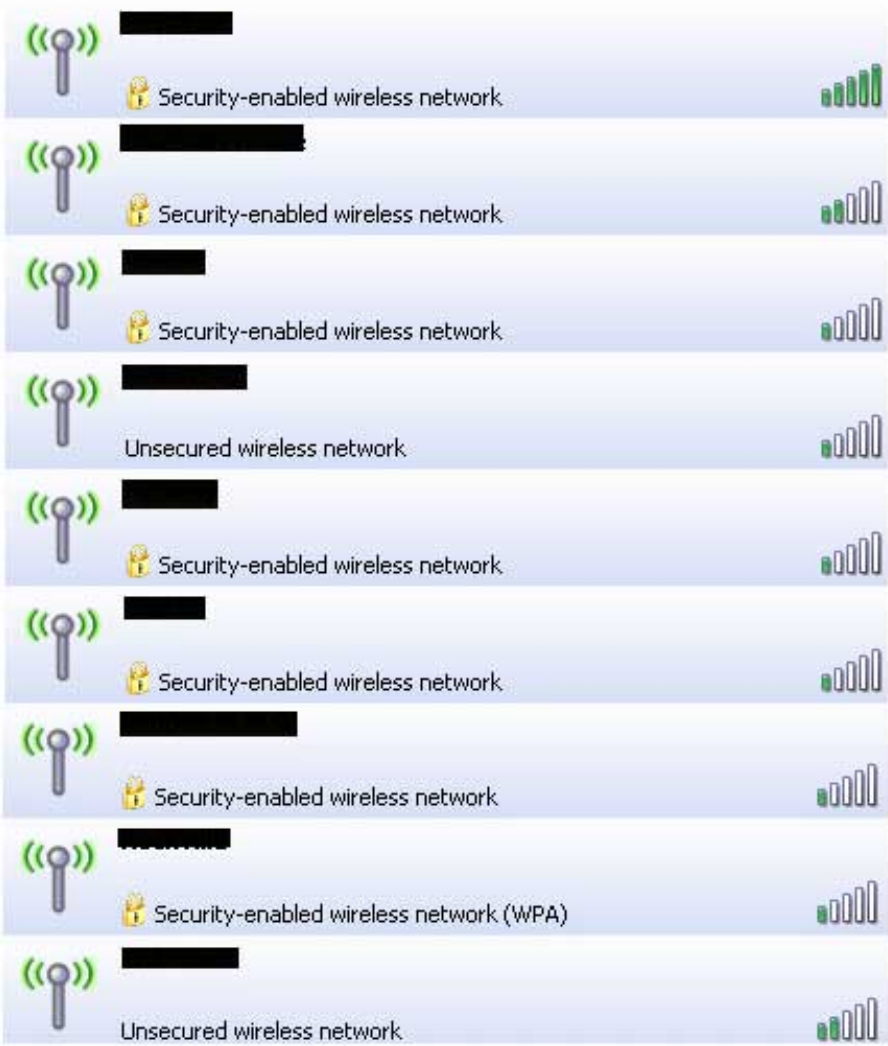


Alfa AWUS036H
500mw Adapter

16 signals

3.2/5 bars
per signal
average

Test 2- Gsky 500mw Wireless USB adapter



Gsky brand
500mw Adapter

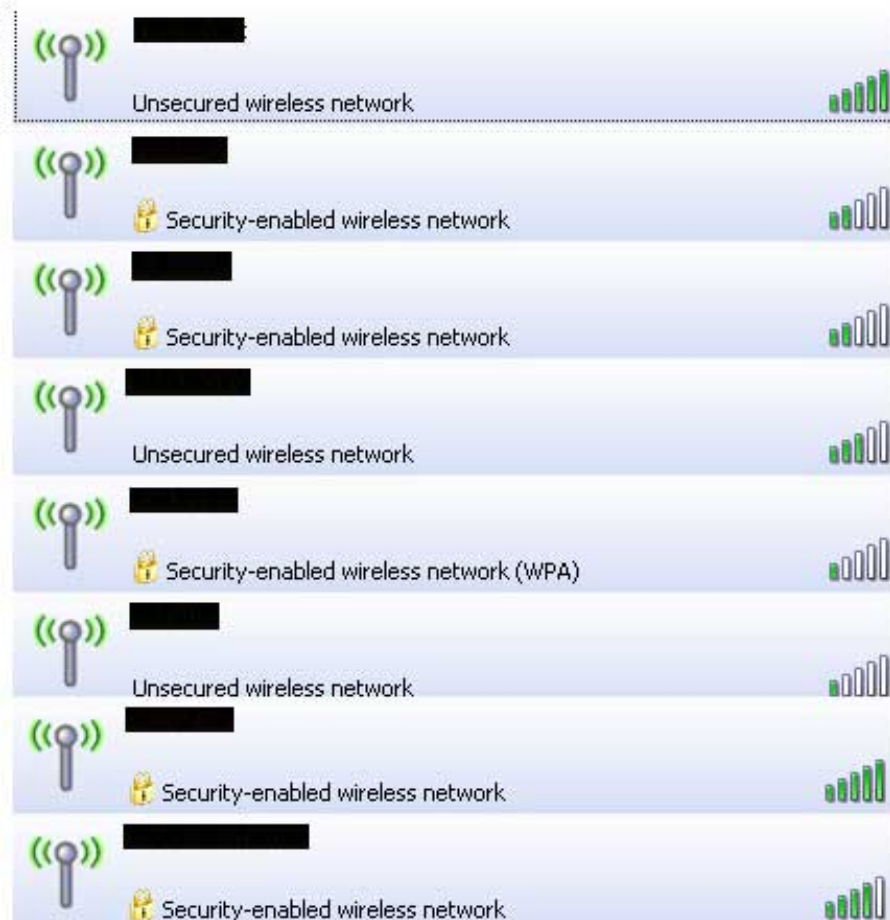
9 signals

1.5/5 bars
per signal
average

Please note that to protect the privacy of owners of the access points detected during the tests, we have blacked out the AP names.

Proceed to next page for the Alfa 50mw adapter test results and a conclusion.

Test 3- Alfa 50mw (fifty mw) Wireless USB adapter



**Alfa AWUS036E
50mw Adapter
(fifty mw)**

8 signals

**2.9/5 bars
per signal
average**

Please note that to protect the privacy of owners of the access points detected during the tests, we have blacked out the AP names.

Conclusion: as you can see from the above images, the networks returned by the Alfa 500mw adapter were greater in number and the signal strength of common access points was much better, more than 2 times better in fact (if you were to factor in zeros for the access points the Alfa picked up which the Gsky did not, it would have been an even greater margin). The Gsky adapter has a less sensitive chipset than the Alfa 500mw adapter, so this explains why. You can see the sensitivity come into play again with the Alfa 50mw adapter, which picked up one fewer network than the Gsky, but had better signal strength to common access points. You will see this from time to time on adapters that do not get as good range as other adapters, but have better sensitivity. In this case, the AWUS036E model, which at the time of this publication sells for \$5-\$10 less than the Gsky, for all intents and purposes had about the same range as the Gsky and better signal strength. The Gsky adapter works good, just like the AWUS036E 50mw adapter from Alfa, but it is certainly no clone of the Alfa 500mw AWUS036H model.