

Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

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Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 13th, 2014, 9:39 pm

I am unable to continue the installation of IPFire on an ALIX 6e1 board. Following the procedures written in <http://wiki.ipfire.org/en/installation/start> and running Ubuntu Linux; I opened minicom, it doesn't have "settings for the serial connection", what is there is "Serial Port Setup", pressing "Enter", "e". I didn't the reason for the D-key, in minicom, it points to Callout Program! Anyway, the buadrate is already set to 115200 8N1. The following paragraph is talking about buadrate of the ALIX board.

My questions are:
Do I "Exit" configuration menu or "Save Setup as dfi"

What is meant by bootable CF card?

The installation page - linked above - tells that PC engine manual describes how to do that. The only manual I found (<http://www.pcengines.ch/pdf/alix2.pdf>) talks about a bootable CF card! As the installation page says, I have put the CF card in the ALIX board after executing 'zcat' command isn't it bootable in that case?

Last edited by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) on February 13th, 2014, 9:40 pm, edited 1 time in total.

Mohamed_Ahmed

Posts: 119
 Joined: September 29th, 2013, 6:20 pm
 Location: Egypt

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 13th, 2014, 10:16 pm

I think you have managed the config of minicom. It's true, description in the wiki is not very exact. I'll see what I can do. 😊

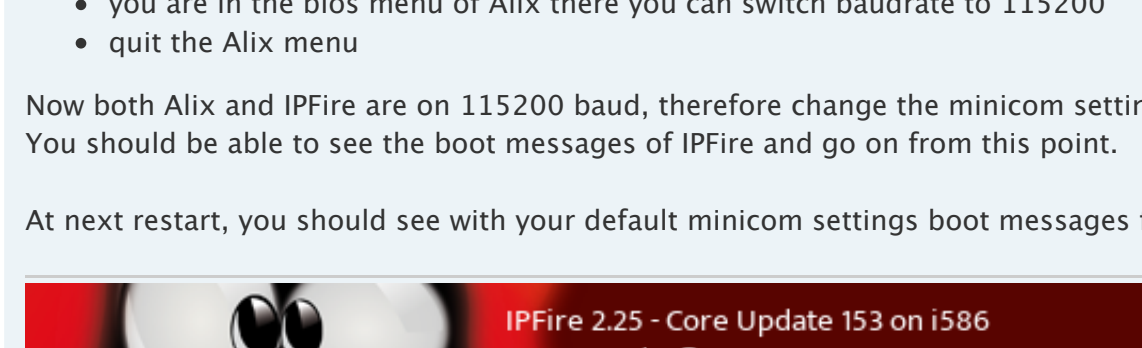
The first run of the Alix with IPFire is a bit tricky. It isn't explained in the wiki (yet), because before Core 56 the baudrates of Alix and IPFire did fit.

First you have to switch Alix baudrate from 38400 to 115200.
To do that,

- set baudrate in minicom to 38400
- switch on Alix
- when memory test counts up, press "s"
- you are in the bios menu of Alix there you can switch baudrate to 115200
- quit the Alix menu

Now both Alix and IPFire are on 115200 baud, therefore change the minicom setting back to this rate.
You should be able to see the boot messages of IPFire and go on from this point.

At next restart, you should see with your default minicom settings boot messages from Alix and IPFire.



BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
 Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
 Location: Mannheim

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

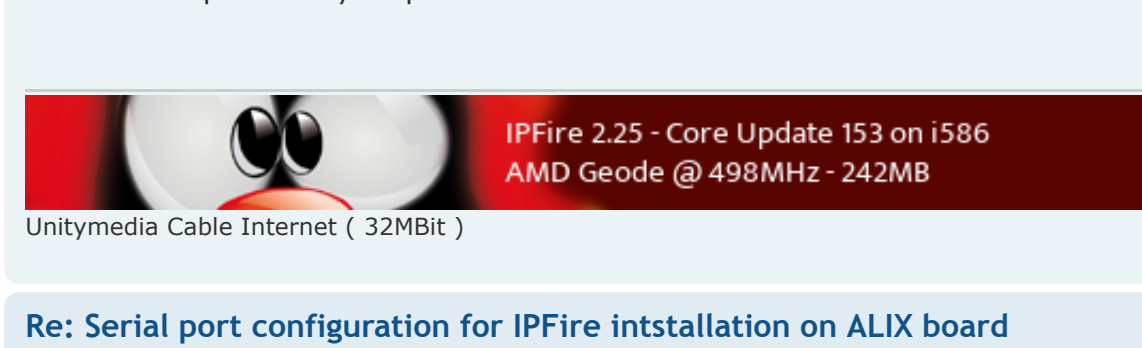
by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 13th, 2014, 10:35 pm

Alright, I do not know how to switch ALIX on!

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 13th, 2014, 10:37 pm

Power on. Depends on your power connection.



BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
 Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
 Location: Mannheim

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

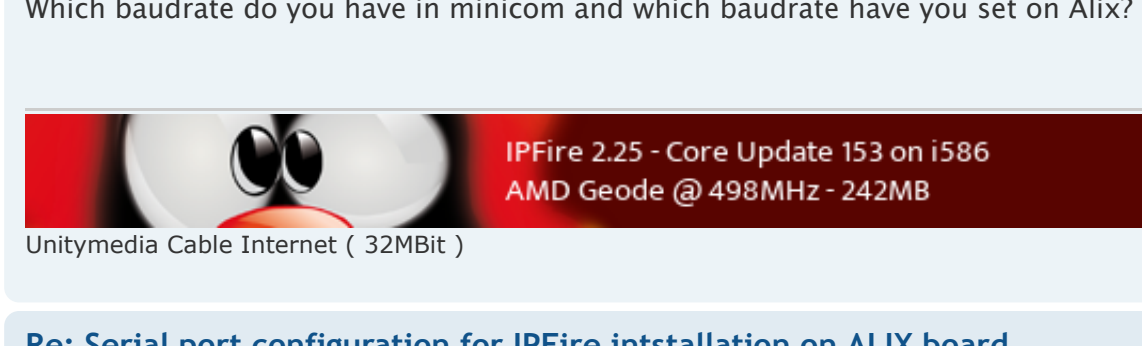
by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 13th, 2014, 10:43 pm

It is powered on, meaning connected to power source and the DB-9 LED is on. After setting the baudrate I "Exit" the configuration menu, what appears afterwards is the message "Press CTRL A Z..." nothing else.

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 13th, 2014, 10:51 pm

Which baudrate do you have in minicom and which baudrate have you set on Alix?



Mohamed_Ahmed

Posts: 119
 Joined: September 29th, 2013, 6:20 pm
 Location: Egypt

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 13th, 2014, 10:54 pm

I have set the minicom to 38400 baudrate.

The PC engine manual says in page 9: "Connect Ethernet as needed"? My configurations has only two connection to the board, the power cable and the null modem cable. Should I connect an Ethernet cable?!

Last edited by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) on February 13th, 2014, 11:09 pm, edited 1 time in total.

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 13th, 2014, 11:12 pm

No. For these first steps you only need your serial connection Alix <--> PC.

When do you have powered on your Alix?
This would be a hint about the step the system is now.

System startup can be described as follows:

- power on
- Alix BIOS starts with a memory test (default **38400**), which lets you enter BIOS menu
- system on CF is started, IPFire switches to **115200**
- IPFire boots up
- first run with config as described in wiki

If the system is in steps 4. or 5. you must communicate with 115200 baud.

It is not good, to power down / power up the running system in config mode. Maybe the system is damaged. 😊

Last edited by [BeBiMa](#) on February 13th, 2014, 11:22 pm, edited 1 time in total.



BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
 Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
 Location: Mannheim

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 13th, 2014, 11:36 pm

I set the minicom to 38400 then "Exit", after that I plug the power cable to the power source. The three LEDs of the board light up, then only DB-9 LED remains on and nothing happen on the minicom, "Press Ctrl A Z ..." only. I will try again in the morning. Thanks for your continuous help.

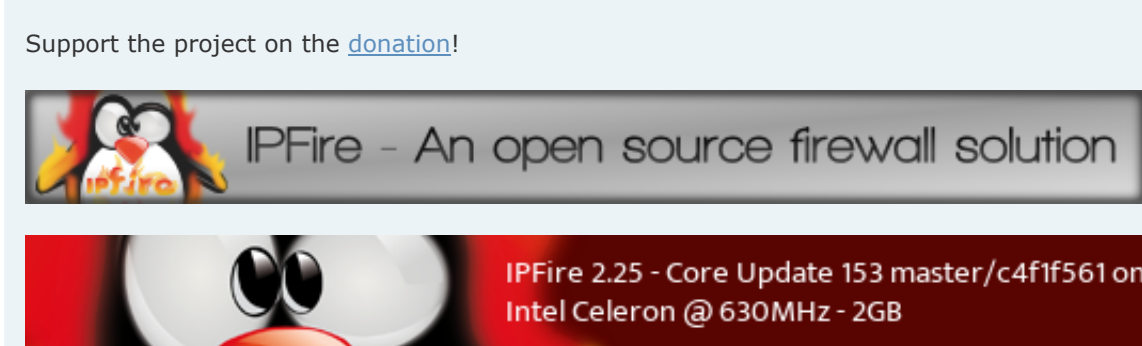
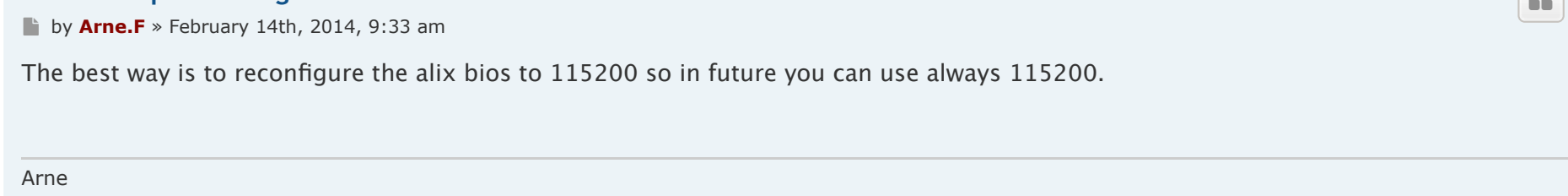
Mohamed_Ahmed

Posts: 119
 Joined: September 29th, 2013, 6:20 pm
 Location: Egypt

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [Arne.F](#) » February 14th, 2014, 9:33 am

The best way is to reconfigure the alix bios to 115200 so in future you can use always 115200.



PS: I will not answer support questions via email and ignore IPFire related messages on my non IPFire.org mail addresses.

Arne.F

Core Developer

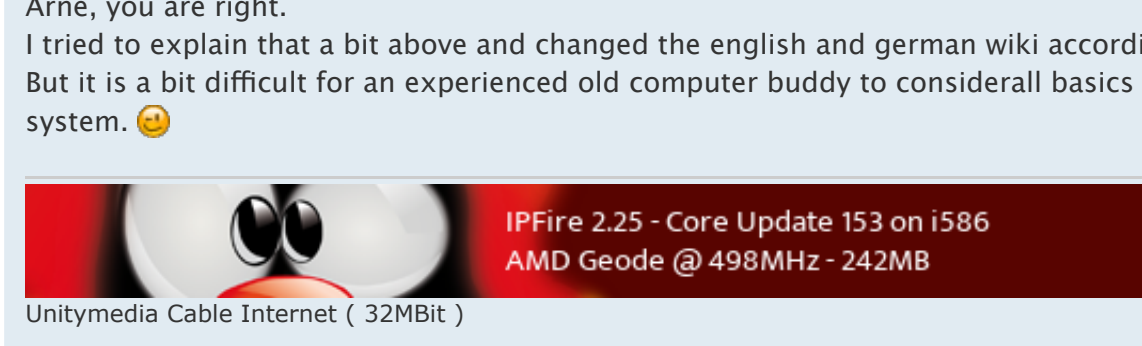

Posts: 8522
 Joined: May 7th, 2006, 8:57 am
 Location: BS <-> NDH
 Contact: [☞](#)

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 14th, 2014, 10:32 am

Arne, you are right.

But it is a bit difficult for an experienced old computer buddy to consider all basics of serial connections and bringing up a computer system. 😊



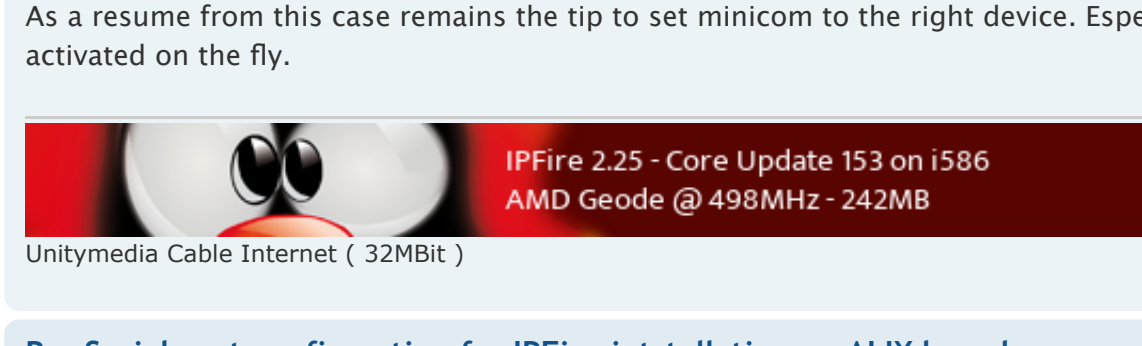
BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
 Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
 Location: Mannheim

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 14th, 2014, 3:37 pm

As a resume from this case remains the tip to set minicom to the right device. Especially when using a USB to serial adapter, which is activated on the fly.



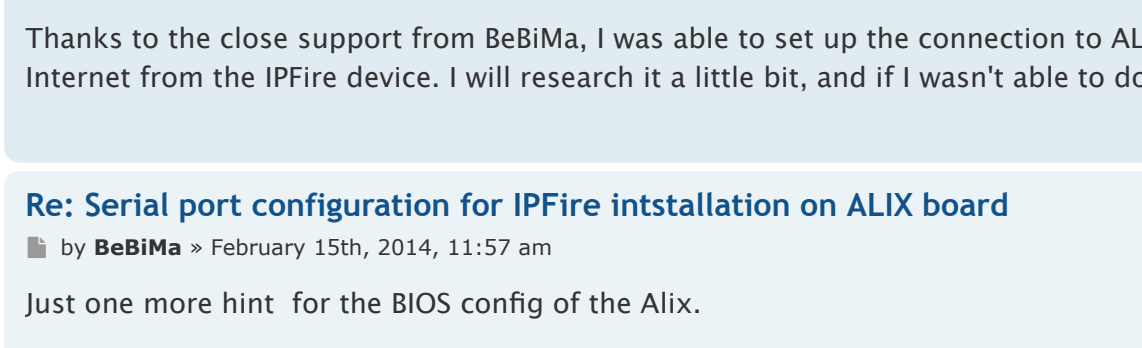
BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
 Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
 Location: Mannheim

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 14th, 2014, 5:54 pm

Thanks to the close support from BeBiMa, I was able to set up the connection to ALIX via a serial cable. But I am unable to access the Internet from the IPFire device. I will research it a little bit, and if I wasn't able to do it, I will post here. 😊



Mohamed_Ahmed

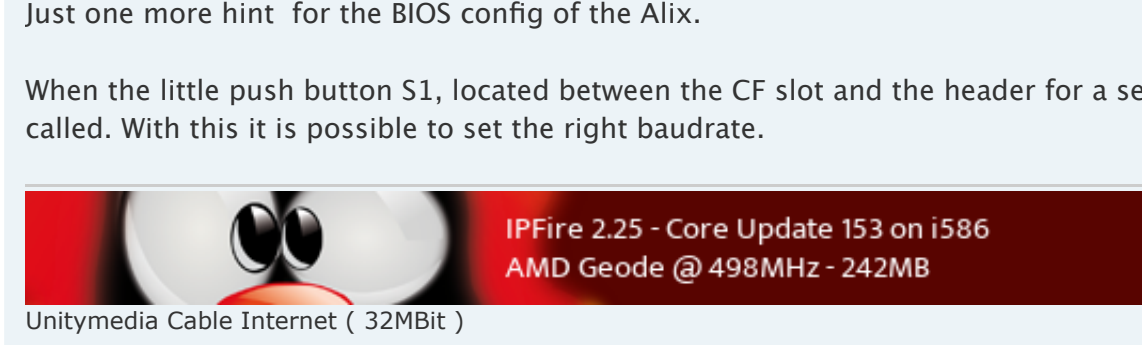
Posts: 119
 Joined: September 29th, 2013, 6:20 pm
 Location: Egypt

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [BeBiMa](#) » February 15th, 2014, 11:57 am

Just one more hint for the BIOS config of the Alix.

When the little push button S1, located between the CF slot and the header for a serial port, is pressed on power up, BIOS menu is called. With this it is possible to set the right baudrate.



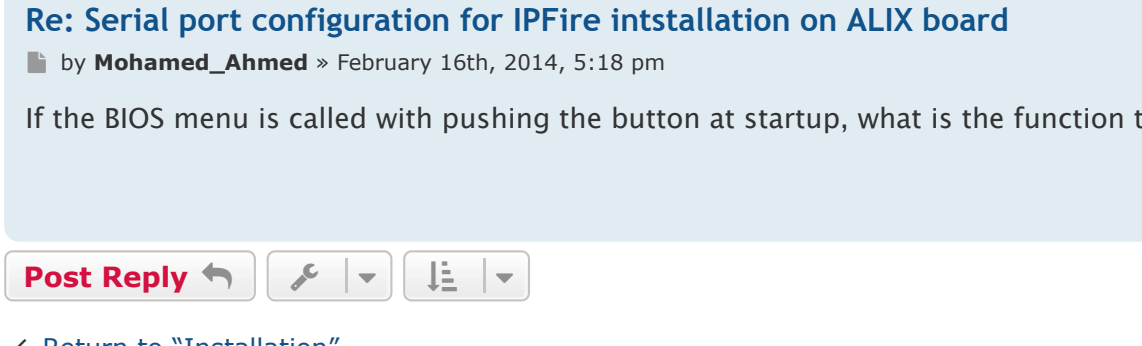
BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
 Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
 Location: Mannheim

Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board

by [Mohamed_Ahmed](#) » February 16th, 2014, 5:18 pm

If the BIOS menu is called with pushing the button at startup, what is the function that one have from pressing the S key at power up?



Mohamed_Ahmed

Posts: 119
 Joined: September 29th, 2013, 6:20 pm
 Location: Egypt

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Re: Serial port configuration for IPFire intstallation on ALIX board



📄 by **BeBiMa** » February 17th, 2014, 9:36 am

Pushing the button and pressing S during memory test do the same function, invoking the BIOS menu. But the S key method only succeeds, if the S is send with the right baudrate (and if the serial port isn't disabled in the BIOS). The push button method guarantees the board is in the BIOS menu state. You can try to find the right baudrate, if you get no answer from your Alix.

BeBiMa

Posts: 2842
Joined: July 30th, 2011, 12:55 pm
Location: Mannheim



Unitymedia Cable Internet (32MBit)

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