Generic: Why do I have to reset the modem and what's this story about MAC addresses ?

A MAC (Media Access Control) Address is a unique identifier. You can have
10 of the same NICs, but each one has it's own MAC. They're hard coded
into the firmware when they're made.

If you unplugged your router from your Cable modem and plugged a PC
directly into it, you might have to reset the modem.
Same holds true if
you had a PC directly connected to your modem and then plugged in your
router, you might have to reset the modem. Your ISP sees that MAC
address of the device that's connected to the modem and keeps it in a
database. If you unplugged one device and plugged in a different one,
it now sees a different MAC and doesn't know what to do. When you reset
your modem, it releases that MAC address and then waits for another
when the modem comes back on.
Kinda like release/renew an IP address,
'cept it's going the other way.

If you look in your router's config screen right now, you might see the
MAC address that it is showing to your ISP. If you disconnected your
router, plugged a PC into it directly and reset the modem, your ISP
would then see a different MAC. You can check that by doing
'ipconfig/all' from a command prompt. You will see someting called the
'Physical Address', that's the MAC address of the device and what your
ISP sees.

When you have other PC's behind your router/firewall, all your ISP sees
is the MAC address of the device connected to your modem, nothing else.
The router takes care of that after it goes through it.

Troubleshooting :
 - IMPORTANT : That works for cable
access.
 - Try to connect a computer right on your cablemodem
and see if your ISP sees your new MAC adress. When so, just put the NIC
that you use right now in your freesco box and you don't have to wurry
about MAC adresses at all. Just make sure you put it in the right pci
slot. The one that freesco sees as eth0. You might have to switch your
NIC's and cables around to get it going.

- It also helps to write down the IP, DNS and gateway numbers from that NIC. You have to fill them
in on eth0.

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