



PC Disguised as an NAS

Synology Disk Station DS-207

BY CPU-ZILLA

Don't let the tiny Synology Disk Station fool you into thinking that it's just another storage device. Although its main function is to serve files over the network, it can do a lot more than just storing data, pictures, music and movies. The Disk Station, similar to the high capacity Cube Station, has the ability to host Web pages, serve music to your iTunes client and even download files off the Internet for you.

Unlike the Cube Station, the new Disk Station DS-207 will support only two hard disk drives. The device comes as a barebone unit without the hard drives and this gives one the option to choose what storage capacities one desires. The Disk Station supports up to two 750GB SATA hard drives, so if it is configured as a RAID 0 array, it will give you a whopping 1.5TB worth of storage space. Besides RAID 0, you can also choose to configure them as RAID 1 or as separate individual volumes.

With up to 1.5TB of storage space, the Disk Station will make a pretty versatile all-in-one home or small office file and application server. Its ability to host PHP scripts and its built-in MySQL

database feature will make it extremely useful for those who does not want to waste anytime configuring a full fledge Linux server. What it offers is an out-of-the-box, ready to run server.

We tested the Disk Station using phpMyAdmin (www.phpmyadmin.net), a useful MySQL administration tool based on PHP and phpBB (www.phpbb.com), a free PHP-based bulletin board application. Installation was surprisingly easy and we managed to get these applications up in a matter of minutes. It was as easy as putting the scripts into the Web directory and then accessing them through the Disk Station, similar to what you would do with a typical Web server. What's more, the Disk Station has built-in support for https connection for its Web management UI, Photo Station service and Web applications that require it.

Besides providing a photo-sharing application that lets you share and manage your photos online, the Disk Station DS-207 also comes with an iTunes service that allows all iTunes client to connect and playback music stored in its hard drives. This feature can be enabled along with

its multimedia service which provides a UPnP (Universal Plug-and-Play) DMA connection to a certified UPnP digital media adapter. Thus, music files stored in its shared music folder can be accessed by both your iTunes client as well as a digital media adapter.

In a small office environment, the Disk Station can also be integrated very seamlessly into a Windows and/or Macintosh network. It can either support users managed through an ADS (Active Directory Server) or using its built-in user management tool, you can create accounts for up to 128 users. Although it is equipped with a Gigabit Ethernet port for enhanced data transfer rates, it cannot support large user groups as it does not handle more than 32 concurrent connections. Compared to the Cube Station, the Disk Station's data transfer rates are somewhat slower, so don't expect fantastic file transfer speeds.

All in all, we absolutely adored the Synology Disk Station for demonstrating what the next generation of NAS devices should look like. And with an attractive price tag of only \$5679, we don't think even a low-end PC (with a free Linux OS) could match its value and the convenience it offers.

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SPECIFICATIONS

Capacity	No. of Drives	Interface	Warranty	Price
More than 1.0TB	Two	Gigabit	One year	\$5679 (two HDDs)

Model No.: DS207

Capacity: 1.5TB maximum (RAID 0)

No. of Drives: Two

Drive Type: 3.5-inch SATA

Interface: Gigabit Ethernet, 3x USB 2.0

Features: CIFS, AppleTalk, FTP, Windows ADS/NFS Domain, UPnP, PHP 5.2.0,

MySQL 4.1.15, Photo Station, Web Station, Download Station, iTunes Service,

Multimedia Service, USB print server, USB copy

Dimensions: 160mm (H) x 218mm (D) x 88mm (W)

Weight: 0.98kg (excluding drives)

HWM'S VERDICT

Physique: 9.0

Features: 9.5

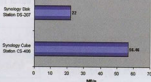
User-friendliness: 8.0

Performance: 6.5

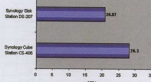
Value: 9.5

8.5
Out of 10

CyrtalMark 0.8.111.261
(Sequential Write)



CyrtalMark 0.8.111.261
(Random Write 6512K)



A feature packed NAS device that doubles up as a mini all-purpose server.

