Synology Disk Station DS207

A STUNNING ARRAY OF FEATURES ADDS TO THE PRICE, BUT IF YOU’LL USE THEM THE DS207 IS WORTH EVERY PENNY.

We looked at the Disk Station DS-106e in our recent NAS drives group test (April 2007, page 68) and were impressed by its plethora of features. The DS207 costs $30 less, but is still expensive. If you can get past the cheap-looking white plastic casing it soon becomes clear why.

For starters, there’s space for two SATA/300 disks - if you’re handy with a screwdriver you should have it up and running in half an hour. A discovery utility runs from the CD, finding the unit straight away. You can then connect to the device’s web interface, where you can manually set an IP address and configure the disks in RAID1 or RAID0.

Menus are easy to use and you’ll find a web server with MySQL and PHP support, a photo server for sharing albums over the web, a media server that now supports iTunes, and an FTP server. Using the Download Redirector software, you can leave BitTorrent files downloading to the DS207 rather than leaving a PC on.

Backup is well covered too. Aside from RAID1, the DS207 has two rear USB ports, which can either be used for printers or external disks. If you attach a disk, you can schedule daily or weekly backups, but you’ll need to format it to the Disk Station’s EXT3 file system for best performance. The Data Replicator II software also allows you to back up files and folders from your networked PCs to the Disk Station. At the front is a third USB port; attach a USB drive and press the C button to copy the contents to a preconfigured folder.

Performance was good, with an average read rate of 11.6MB/s and a write speed of 10.9MB/s, although this is likely to vary with different hard disks. And by the time you’ve shelled out for two 500GB disks, the DS207 works out more expensive than other TBR NAS drives. But if you’ll take advantage of the extra features, it’s well worth the premium.

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