

Synology DiskStation DS210+

Very expensive, but also incredibly fast and easy to use

Price £314.99 inc VAT • Supplier www.novatech.co.uk • Manufacturer www.synology.com

The Synology DS210+ is by far and away the most expensive NAS box we've tested, and at £315, we were surprised that it didn't include any hard disks. However, as it turns out, the DS210+ is able to justify its incredibly high price.

Its extremely quiet 70mm fan did a great job of keeping our hard disk cool and it was fairly easy to set up. What really impressed us were the instructions – they're very easy to follow, with all the stages impeccably documented. Installing hard disks is accomplished by removing half of the fascia, which is easy enough, but the fascia flexes a lot more than we'd expect for a NAS box costing £315. There are three USB 2 ports, an eSATA port and even support for WiFi dongles.

The web interface is a dream to use, with six common tasks listed as favourites on the home page. The list of features the DS210+ supports is almost endless, including an iTunes server. The backup feature even has the option of

using Amazon's S3 backup service. In addition to iTunes, it supports Logitech's Squeezebox, as well as DLNA/UPnP compatible media streamers.

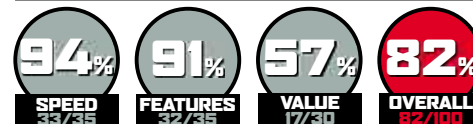
With iSCSI support, you're able to configure all or portions of volumes as iSCSI drives, which appear on your PC as local disks, after you've initialised and formatted them in Windows. The DS210+ has one of the more advanced BitTorrent clients we've seen too. You can even save data from video surveillance cameras and access the live video feeds via an iPhone app.

With a 1.06GHz Marvell processor and 512MB of DDR2 RAM, it came as no surprise that the DS210+ was a particularly fast NAS box. In both write speed tests, it annihilated every other NAS box. It was nearly twice as fast as its nearest competitor, the QNAP TS-219P Turbo NAS, with a stonking write speed of 51.3MB/sec. It was also the only NAS box in our test to top 20MB/sec in

the torturous small file write test, with a write speed of 27.1MB/sec.

The DS210+ is ridiculously fast, but more importantly, it's easy to use. However, the DS210J, while not quite as fast, is much cheaper and has a similar set of features. **al**

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Synology DiskStation DS210J

Fast and easy to use

Price £164.98 inc VAT • Supplier www.novatech.co.uk • Manufacturer www.synology.com

Despite costing almost half the price of its speed freak sibling, the DS210+, the Synology DS210J feels slightly better constructed. However, it sports a lower hardware specification, with a slower Marvell CPU, 128MB rather than 512MB of RAM and no eSATA port. There are three USB 2 ports, one of which is located on the front panel. All three USB 2 ports support WiFi dongles.

The fascia splits in two, revealing two hard disk bays and a 70mm cooling fan that's inaudible from more than a few metres away. The DiskStation Manager 2.3 web interface is the same as that included with the DS210+ too, so it's just as feature-rich and easy to use. RAID 0, 1 and JBOD are supported, as well as an iTunes server that's quick to set up. There's also support for Logitech's Squeezebox, as well as DLNA/UPnP-compatible media streamers.

It's easy to create iSCSI targets too; these then just need to be initialised and formatted in

Windows. A Bit-Torrent client allows for speed, port and also share ratio control.

RapidShare and eMule are also supported, and all downloads can be scheduled to run at different speeds depending on the time of day. The Surveillance Station 4 app allows you to use video surveillance cameras, saving data directly to the hard disk, with iPhone apps available for viewing live video feeds.

Among the plethora of other applications is the same incredibly useful backup software included with DS210+; this includes desktop backup management for both Windows and Mac OS X, which can make immediate copies of files on your desktop as well as emails.

The DS210J proved to be one of the faster NAS boxes, although in the large file test, the DS210+ managed a write speed of 51.3MB/sec, close to double that of the DS210J. However, the DS210J was slightly quicker in the small file read test, with a read speed of 23MB/sec.

While the DS210J isn't the fastest NAS box we've tested, it has the perfect blend of speed, ease of use and value for money. It's also bristling with an arsenal of features that should please nearly everyone. **al**

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