



At the back of the unit you will find two exhaust fans that draw hot air out to ensure efficiency cooling system.

Synology DS508

The moment you logon to the AJAX based web management interface of the DS507, you know why this network storage appliance won our editors' choice award. First off, kudos to Synology for putting so much effort into developing such a first class management UI, an aspect of a NAS system that many NAS makers have neglected ever since NAS have gone mainstream. As a matter of fact, the main page is so well structured and each option is so well described, we felt Microsoft's Windows Vista control panel team could learn quite a bit from this implementation. Worth noting is that this UI wasn't developed solely for DS508, but is also available on majority of NAS offerings from Synology.

For a 5-bay NAS, the physical dimension of the DS508 can be considered quite compact. Its front panel doesn't really tell you a lot of information about the system's status as it lacks LCD screen. What you get is just a couple of rows of LED indicators. It's not really an issue to fuss about, considering most of the time such device will be left in the corner but we can't ignore the fact that the inclusion of an LCD poster would definitely make our life easier when troubleshooting the unit. Functionality wise, the DS508 is capable of performing basically any tasks we could ever expect from a high-end NAS device. It offers the usual networked storage functionality, user management, storage based services, system and power management and monitoring, data backup functionality, MySQL database support, and if a modem is connected to it, this device can even connect to the Internet. Of course, it also supports external devices via its built-in USB and eSATA interfaces and most impressively, it can be turned into network video recorder (connect your IP camera to the network and get DS508 to record

its stream). Every single port of the DS508 is hot-swap capable and depending on the number of disks installed, the storage system of the DS508 can be configured in either RAID 0, 1, 5 or 6 array, or to run each of the disks as independent drive. Creating a 5-disk, 5TB RAID-0 array took us less than 30 minutes, and to transfer a 7.8 GB large file over to this said array took us 3 minutes and 33 seconds (about 34MB/s). Similarly, on a RAID 5 array, the DS508 took about the same amount of time to write the same file onto it. Obviously, performance remains uncomparable to a locally attached storage system, due to the fact that every I/O operation still has to go through the TCP/IP stack (meaning there is a lot of overhead processing to deal with), but among all other high NAS offerings, DS508's sequential transfer performance is actually quite impressive. One shouldn't treat the RAID support as a performance enhancement functionality but rather a form of flexibility in configuring a storage array that suit your needs. (RAID 0 if you need a single, larger than 1.5GB partition, RAID 1 for data redundancy, and RAID 5/6 for both, size and redundancy)

DS508 is certainly not the quietest NAS around. In the longer term we reckon it may annoy some if it is position near a workstation. The noise is mostly generated by the dual exhaust fans located at the back of the unit but for system modder, the good news is that you can easily replaced them with a quieter one (note: doing this will void your warranty) since they are plugged into the mainboard via the usual 3-pin fan header. It will take more than just a page to fill all the DS508 can do, but in brief, it's a very capable "mini storage server" that's managed via the best NAS management UI we've come across.

—Gui Jue Fok



OVERALL RATING ★★★★★

NETWORK ATTACHED STORAGE

Synology DS508

PRICE

SGD1905 (Barebone)



- Excellent performance.
- Multi functions, including streaming photo album and music as web services.
- First class management UI.
- Surveillance capability.
- Robust build quality.



- Operation noise is on the high side.
- Lacks LCD poster

SPECIFICATIONS

CPU frequency 800 MHz

RAM size 512 MB

Internal HDD 5x 3.5" HDD

Max capacity Up to 7.5 TB

External HDD Interface 2x USB 2.0, 1x eSATA

LAN 2x gigabit LAN

Dimension 203mm x 242mm x 177mm

Weight 4.75kg

Max supported IP Camera 10

Supported Networking Protocols CIFS, AFP (3.1), FTP, NFS

Security Encrypted network backup, FTP over SSL/TLS, FTP Autop-Block, HTTPS

Supported File system EXT3, FAT (External Disk only), NTFS (External Disk Read only)

Max user accounts 2048

Max Group 256

Max Shared Folder 200

Max Concurrent Connections 256

Utilities Synology Assistant, Synology Data Replicator 3, Synology Download Redirector

Built-in Applications Surveillance Station, Photo Station 3, File Station, Audio Station, Web Station, PHP/MySQL, Download Station 2, iTunes Server

Supported clients Windows 2000 onward, Mac OS X 10.3 onward

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