

DUAL-DRIVE NAS DEVICES

PATRIOT VALKYRIE

PRICE \$199 / CONTACT RECTRON
PHONE (03) 8545 2833 / WEB www.patriotmem.com

We thought the Valkyrie was pretty good value when we first saw it, but in the light of some of the pricing we've seen this month, it's pretty spectacular for \$199. It's considerably faster than the original Corza we reviewed some time ago, writing our 5GB of mixed files in a little over 6 minutes. That's a pretty decent effort. What's also good is the Valkyrie's extra server features, with its ability to handle FTP, printer and BitTorrent functions. It doesn't have email alert support and can't do web hosting, although these are minor drawbacks. With two USB

ports, you can have one for a printer and another for external USB storage. The two SATA bays can be used in RAID 0, 1 or JBOD. Thankfully, there are no internal cables — just slot the drives into the bay holders, add in the screws, slide the drives into the cage and you're ready to go. The software isn't as slick as some of the more expensive options, yet it's still browser-based and isn't too difficult to work through. There's UPnP support, but it's not DLNA certified from what we can see. Still, this is by far the cheapest dual-bay NAS we've seen and delivers pretty



decent value for money. **PC User says: You won't find too many dual-bay NAS boxes for this price.**

SYNOLOGY DISKSTATION DS210J

PRICE \$329 / CONTACT FORTUNETEC
PHONE (02) 9748 0001 / WEB www.synology.com

The DS210j is a good \$250 cheaper than the DS209 we reviewed back in the October 2009 issue (see page 53), although it also comes with a slower 800MHz processor (compared to the DS209's 1.2GHz chip). That didn't show up in our 5GB transfer tests, with the DS210j maintaining excellent speed and writing data to our 1TB hard drive in just over 4 minutes. Another thing we love is the lack of internal cables

we've seen on previous Synology boxes. You still need to install the drives on the internal cage, but it uses a simple 'slide and lock' process. The DS210j is loaded with features and can basically do everything from BitTorrent downloads to hosting your own web site. It's DLNA certified and can work as a printer server — you just plug your printer into the USB port at the back. Setup is fairly easy, although the reboot time seemed a bit long. To be fair,

none of these devices is fast in that area. The build quality isn't exactly bullet-proof compared to more expensive models, but for what's on offer, its features list can't be faulted. **PC User says: It's one of the most feature-rich NAS boxes at this price.**



WESTERN DIGITAL MY BOOK WORLD EDITION II 4TB

PRICE \$740 / CONTACT SYNEXX / PHONE 1300 100 100 / WEB www.wdc.com

If you're looking for the simplest way to get a huge 4TB of storage onto your home or business network and you don't mind paying for it, the My Book World Edition II should fit the bill nicely. With two 2TB hard drives built in, the device is aimed at those who don't wish to fiddle around with do-it-yourself and would rather just plug it in and

forget about it. It's similar to the My Book World Edition, with a single USB port and Ethernet port on the rear, and a fairly basic features list after that. With the two drives in RAID 1 mode, it works out a bit slower than the single-drive version, but is definitely a better option if you're looking for something safe on which to store your

important documents. However, considering there are no FTP or BitTorrent downloads, think of it as storage only. Having said that, compared to other units in this group, if all you want is storage, it's reasonable value when you factor in the cost of the drives. **PC User says: The simplest way to get 4TB of storage on your home network.**



Can I use any drive?

The short answer is no. While most drives should work, not all drives deliver optimum performance in every NAS box, so it's important to check which drives are supported

by the unit you have before you purchase drives. Some drives either won't hibernate or offer less than stellar performance. For more details, try the following sites:
* Synology — www.tinyurl.com/syndrives
* QNAP — www.tinyurl.com/qnapdrives

D-LINK DNS-323

PRICE \$319 / CONTACT D-LINK
PHONE 1300 700 100 / WEB www.dlink.com.au

We've reviewed this DNS-323 several times and although the hardware itself basically holds its own compared with other units, the software needs some serious updating. D-Link's detection tool is a mass of buttons and entry points that hasn't changed since we first saw it a couple of years ago. It generally works, but it's nowhere near as slick as other offerings we've seen. And with

Synology now offering the DS210j for just \$10 more, its superior speed, features and easy-to-use software make it a better option. The DNS-323 has no web hosting capabilities, although it does come with BitTorrent and printer server functionality. As with the DNS-313, installing drives in this one is as easy as it gets, with its slide-off cover and no-tools-required

installation. Data transfer speeds are pretty decent at less than 6 minutes, but we reckon its high time D-Link looked at improving its software interface. At the very least, Patriot's Valkyrie delivers much better value.
PC User says: Not bad, but it needs an improved user interface.



70%

— QUAD-DRIVE NAS DEVICES

SYNOLOGY DISKSTATION DS410

PRICE \$750 / CONTACT FORTUNETEC
PHONE [02] 9748 0001 / WEB www.synology.com

The DS410 would be our pick if you're looking for a fully-featured expandable four-bay DIY NAS box. It's more expensive than the D-Link DNS-343, but we think it offers better long-term value. It features DLNA/UPnP network media transfer and can host up to 30 web sites, download torrents and even supports connectivity with iPhones. On our testing with a single drive, the DS410 is just a tick slower than the all-conquering TS-459 Pro, with an excellent 5GB mixed file write time of 3 minutes 14 seconds that's also 2 minutes

faster than the DNS-343. With two USB 2.0 ports and an eSATA port, you can use the DS410's built-in printer server and still have external hard drives plugged into the unit at the same time. Its four bays mean the RAID options really open up, with the addition of RAID 5, 6 and 10 on offer. You can even use it as a surveillance recorder via an IP camera, and it has PHP and MySQL built in to handle web sites. The one thing it lacks is hot-swappable drive bays, so you'd still need to power down the unit to replace one. Still, for

a home or small business, there's more value here than in the DNS-343 and you'll save about \$500 over the TS-459 Pro, so we'd choose this one for the more serious home user.
PC User says: Packed with features and better value than the DNS-343.

PC USER BEST BUY



85%

What is DLNA?

DLNA stands for Digital Living Network Alliance and is actually a subset of UPnP (Universal Plug and Play) to allow computing devices to communicate with home entertainment gear such as some TVs. In practice, DLNA support doesn't mean every audio and video file will work on every DLNA-capable TV or device, so make sure you check exactly what support your DLNA-capable device delivers. The DLNA standard is quite complex and doesn't just rely on codecs and file containers, but on what are called 'profiles', which include other features such as bit rates and video resolution. So while DLNA sounds like a great idea, getting it to work with your media may not be so easy.

WESTERN DIGITAL SHARESPACE 2TB

PRICE \$599 / CONTACT SYNEX
PHONE 1300 100 100 / WEB www.wdc.com

The 2TB version of Western Digital's ShareSpace NAS box might seem expensive, but it's actually decent value. You get all of the features of the 8TB version and two 1TB hard drives to start off with. It's set up in Spanning Mode (also known as JBOD) and you can easily add extra drives without having to reformat and lose what you've stored already; however, there's no redundancy in this mode. While our test read time was exactly the same as the 8TB unit, writing took a little less. Adding new drives is fairly easy: you need to screw in the cage bracket and then slide the drives in place. They're not hot-swappable, although the drives sit horizontally rather than vertically, which is something

we prefer. Both of the ShareSpace units have three USB 2.0 ports in total and all are storage only. The software here is among the easiest we saw in this roundup and takes little time to set up shared folders and mapping. Obviously, this is more expensive than a My Book option, but far more versatile.
PC User says: Not the cheapest prebuilt option, but it's the one we'd choose first.



85%

PC USER BEST BUY