

BILLION BIPAC 7700N

Bargain performer

■ ELIAS PLASTIRAS

The BiPAC 7700N is a tiny ADSL2+ modem and router that is almost the antithesis of all-in-one routers such as the Fritz!Box 7390, but it still manages to offer a good set of features. It's one of the smallest units we've seen to feature an ADSL2+ modem, a four-port Ethernet switch and an 802.11n wireless access point, and we think it's one of the most convenient networking units on the Australian market due to its size.

Furthermore, it's priced at around \$70, but can be even cheaper if buyers shop around, and this makes it excellent value for money.

The BiPAC 7700N is only a little bit bigger than the Billion BiPAC 5200S RD single-port ADSL2+ modem/router, but don't be fooled by its small stature — it has a lot more functionality. Primarily, it has a full set of 10/100 Ethernet ports and it also includes 802.11n Wi-Fi that can run at up to 300Mbps. It has two external antennas, it features a physical on/off switch, a Wi-Fi on/off switch, a WPS button, it can be wall mounted, and it doesn't have overly bright status LEDs.

When users first log in to router's Web browser (192.168.1.254), they are prompted with a quick set up wizard that can automatically detect their ADSL settings, and will then take them through to the wireless settings. There is an option to skip straight to the wireless settings, and we recommend this as the network will otherwise be open when a user's ISP details are already in it.

We chose to configure the wireless settings first, and then re-visited the wizard so that it could detect our ADSL2+ settings. It took about three minutes for it to detect our settings, and then allowed us to enter our login details. All up, we were up and running (complete with wireless network) in around five minutes. And that's the best thing about this router: it's really very simple and effective for anyone who just

wants something cheap to get online and share an Internet connection.

Its wireless networking performance was solid in our tests. From 2m away it recorded a file transfer rate of 7.18 megabytes per second (MBps), while from 10m away it recorded a transfer rate of 6.49MBps. For a cheap router, these are very good results. Users can use this router to distribute an Internet connection in a small apartment with ease, and they can even use it to stream high definition video files. We had no problems sending files from a laptop to an A.C Ryan Playon!HD2 media streamer.

The router has all the usual features expected of a wireless router; it supports port forwarding, DMZ and dynamic DNS. It even has a parental feature that includes a timer for Internet access, as well as URL filters. The URL filters also work if users just place one word in there rather than a whole address. If a flagged word is in a URL that someone attempts to access, then the request will bring up a connection error.

There's not much more to say about the BiPAC 7700N. It's a tiny unit that worked well during our evaluation period. Considering it's an ADSL2+ modem, a 4-port Ethernet switch and an 802.11n (300Mbps) Wi-Fi access point in one, and that it only costs around \$70, it's pretty hard not to consider it a Best Buy. ■

THE FINAL WORD

An ADSL2+ modem and 802.11n (300Mbps) Wi-Fi in one unit for around \$70

STAR RATING
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