



● WIRELESS BROADBAND ROUTER

Linksys Wireless-G SRX



PRICE £92 (£108 inc VAT)

DELIVERY £5 (£6 inc VAT)

SUPPLIER www.dabs.com/uk (code: 3P7ZD1)

INTERNET www.linksys.com

VERDICT The fastest WLAN router we've seen, and its range even benefits standard setups.

Despite the full 802.11n standard being some way off, manufacturers are already plundering its technology. Belkin was first with its Pre-N (see issue 125, p69), but both the routers on this page follow suit. They use the bit of 802.11n everyone's interested in: MIMO, or multiple input, multiple output. MIMO takes account of how the signals bounce off static objects, and so reflected radio waves can be added to the main signal, boosting data throughput. Linksys has branded its version SRX, for Speed and Range Expansion.

To test Linksys' claims that SRX is eight times faster and triple the range of 802.11g, we copied 200MB of files from a desktop PC to a notebook with the CardBus SRX adaptor. In close proximity, this took one minute, 36 seconds, for a good but

The three antennae are used to boost performance.

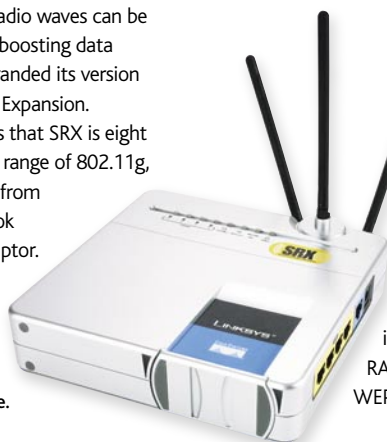
not exceptional 16.7Mb/sec. However, MIMO is by its nature slower up close, so moving to an adjacent room saw performance increase to 35.6Mb/sec – the fastest WLAN throughput we've ever seen. On moving to a more distant location with extra obstructions, bandwidth dropped only marginally to 33.3Mb/sec.

Even in the garden, the SRX still maintained

14.3Mb/sec. We found that the notebook's Centrino WLAN also achieved 3.8Mb/sec at this distance – something no 802.11g router we've tested could.

But the SRX isn't just a speed king. It's packed with security features as well.

WLAN encryption options include WPA-PSK, WPA with RADIUS authentication, and WEP up to 128-bit. There's MAC



address control, and you can select entries from a list of already associated wireless clients. A Stateful Packet Inspection firewall is built in, with VPN passthrough and WAN Ping blocking. A separate section allows you to restrict Internet access to specific times, block websites by URL and keyword, and prevent certain services from getting through. You can configure port forwarding, port triggering for special applications, and a DMZ. UPnP port forwarding can be found in a separate section, too. The SRX even supports the 802.11e Quality of Service standard, and can keep a dynamic DNS entry regularly updated via the DynDNS service.

The Linksys Wireless-G SRX is the fastest router we've yet tested. Netgear's RangeMax may beat it in close proximity or in the garden, but in between, the Linksys is king – and that's where you're most likely to use wireless. The premium over Linksys's standard SpeedBooster router may be a hefty £30, but it's worth it if you want the fastest wireless connection available.

JAMES MORRIS

PC PRO RATINGS

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES & DESIGN	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

SPECIFICATIONS MIMO 802.11g router; WAN connection; four-port 10/100 Ethernet switch with automatic crossover sensing. Man code: WRT54GX.