

Buffalo Technology LinkStation Pro

Price (EX VAT)	£144.99
Price (Inv VAT)	£170.36
Manufacturer	Buffalo
Supplier	Misco

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Overall  9/10

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Backup options are extensive as you can secure data to a USB drive or to another LinkStation and jobs can be run immediately, once at a specific time or scheduled for a specific time each day. However, we would suggest scheduling these outside normal hours as while they are running you can't access a large number of administrative functions such as disk initialization, formatting and checking, the sleep timer function, backup job creation or all share and user related tools. You can also send the appliance into a sleep mode but during these periods the appliance will be unavailable and network backups will not work.

Client backup features are just as extensive as the bundle includes Buffalo's Easy Backup utility which allows users to schedule their own backup tasks and restore their own files. You also get Memeo's AutoBackup software and the price includes a single user license. This is a lot more sophisticated as it supports a greater number of backup destinations, offers optional backup encryption and after the first scheduled backup has run will only secure file changes or new files.



Even though the feature list is very similar to the TeraStation products there are some options that it doesn't support. First, the USB ports cannot be used to share printers over the network. The appliance backup tools also don't support copying data to a local destination although there's not much point with only a single hard disk. UPS monitoring is supported as you can connect one to a USB port but the product must provide a smart signal such as those from vendors such as APC and Belkin.

Buffalo rates the LinkStation Pro as one of the fastest of its type currently on the market. We tested these claims by copying a 690MB video file from a Supermicro Pentium D 3.2GHz PC over Gigabit Ethernet to the appliance which returned 16.5Mbyte/sec write speed. Read speeds were even better as copying the file back from the appliance saw this completed in a mere 35 seconds for an average speed of nearly 20Mbyte/sec. We also tested raw throughput using the Iometer utility which reported a top 31Mbyte/sec for 100 per cent reads and 19Mbyte/sec for write operations. Clearly, the LinkStation Pro delivers on Buffalo's promises.

Verdict

Buffalo delivers a well designed NAS appliance with plenty of capacity on tap and a fine turn of speed as well. Installation is very simple and it offers a similar level of storage, backup and security features as the higher-end TeraStation appliances.