

POWERLINE NETWORKING

PRICE

£95 (£111 inc VAT)
for a pair

DELIVERY

£4 (£5 inc VAT)

SUPPLIER

www.broadband
buyer.co.uk

INTERNET

www.solwise.co.uk

SPECIFICATIONS

Intellon INT6000
powerline network
transceiver • 10/100
Ethernet port • QoS
traffic prioritisation •
power, powerline
activity, Ethernet
activity LEDs

PERFORMANCE



FEATURES & DESIGN



VALUE FOR MONEY



OVERALL



Solwise PL-200AV

Good performance, but the integrated form factor can be inconvenient

While the IEEE crawls its way to yet another draft of 802.11n, it's worth remembering that wireless isn't the only way to get a high-speed network for the home or office. Powerline networking, which uses your existing mains wiring to transmit data, has been quietly improving over the past few years, and the latest standard has reached a top speed of 200Mb/sec. We've already seen the first such devices from Devolo, Netgear and Panasonic (see *issue 148, p87*), and now UK-based Solwise has joined the fray.

Installation simply involves plugging them into power sockets, avoiding surge protectors and, ideally, multiway adapters. Going back to the same location as our previous tests – a high-rise flat – we conducted the same tests with the Solwise plugs. With one plugged into our router and the other plugged into a socket in the same room, the units recognised each other straight away.

The 200Mb/sec figure is purely theoretical, and real-world results aren't likely to approach this – the speeds we saw were almost identical to previous devices, with our 1GB test folder transferring at an average rate of just under 17Mb/sec. Moving one plug to an adjacent room didn't affect this speed, and we found no degradation when using a four-way plug adapter.

Performance is a shade under the Devolo dLAN 200 AVdesk, but not noticeably. Like the Devolo, the Solwise plugs conform to the HomePlug AV standard, which uses QoS (Quality of Service) to prioritise time-critical data packets, such as those involving VoIP or video streaming. Running a 720p HD video stream caused no problems in any of the situations we



Forget about wireless networking with these easy to use powerline adapters.

tried, although trying to get a second simultaneous stream over the network caused stuttering, which the four-way plug and introduction of interference each made significantly much worse.

With a pair of Devolo dLAN 200 AVdesks now costing £108, there isn't much in it when it comes to pricing. And with this in mind, we'd have to opt for the Devolos, which offer slightly better performance, besides having a form factor that will live more happily with neighbouring plugs. **ROSS BURRIDGE**