

## Belkin N1 Vision wireless router

### Will this get you connected?

by Davey Winder published on 23 November 2007

The Belkin N1 Vision has a lot going for it: the performance boost of being a "second draft 802.11n" device for starters with the truly impressive wireless range that brings, then there is the four Gigabit Ethernet ports and the no disc required true plug and play setup.

But when it comes to jaw dropping party tricks, this is one router that really delivers and the clue is in the Vision part of the name.

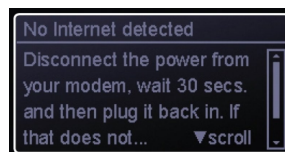
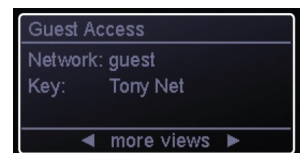
This wireless router does away with pretty LED lights to convey information such as whether it is powered up, connected to a DSL line and transferring data across the Internet. Instead it brings a LCD screen right into the router itself to do the job properly.

When we say properly, we mean it as well. There are your upload and download speeds, of course, a network bandwidth usage report, the number of devices you have connected to the router, the date and time plus a guest access network security key function.

If something goes wrong, say the internet connection drops, the N1 Vision display is used to provide help and suggest the best way to resolve the problem, which is nice. Nicest is that guest access display which is tied into, unsurprisingly, the guest access mode.

If you want to let a visitor to your house or office access the Net via your wireless network on a temporary basis, all it takes is the press of a button and the deed is done. A security key is generated automatically, the guest connection is shown on-screen together with the amount of bandwidth that connected device, that guest, is using.

What is cool is that the screen, because it can display all connected devices, will tell you when



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someone who shouldn't be using your network is doing just that, assuming you have not secured it properly, as well as reporting how much of your bandwidth they are stealing.

Of course, far better that you should secure it properly in the first place, which the N1 Vision router setup makes extremely straightforward to do. Which, in turn, makes that particular display feature a tad pointless.

And therein lies the rub: when you get to thinking about it, much of the display novelty soon wears off after the initial setup is done and everything is running smoothly. In all honesty, how much time do you spend, or want to spend for that matter, looking at what your router is up to? Exactly, as little as possible. Instead you just want it to do what it is meant to, provide you with a stable and speedy connection throughout your property.

Fortunately, the Belkin does just that. The promised maximum range of 1600 feet equates to pretty much one end of your house to the other unless you happen to be the Queen. Our test connection was as stable as they come, and we cannot argue with the steady throughput it delivered courtesy of the built-in 3x3 MIMO radio design. Wired connectivity is equally impressive, with no less than four full Gigabit Ethernet ports to play with.

The trouble is, that what you are left with is a perfectly good wireless router when you take away the screen functionality but one which costs you a premium for that display which you will find you hardly ever use. Which leaves us thinking that perhaps the more sensible option, and certainly the better value one, is to opt for the standard no-display N1 model instead and save a few quid.

## VERDICT

We like the N1 Vision because the display truly is innovative, but the truth is it adds to the cost and the novelty soon wears off.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Wireless Router

### Good

Depth of information displayed, performance, ease of setup

### Bad

Novelty soon wears off, cost

### Verdict

Just how much information can a Wi-Fi router display?

**Price** £90

**Our score**

**7/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**