

ZyXel GS-108

Introduction

Today everyone wants wireless network so they can go anywhere with there wireless clients. But why should you go for wireless when you still have desktop computers? And what do you have to get when you want to get something better then average? Well all we can say is get yourself some gigabit networking equipment and let the madness begin! The advantages of gigabit ethernet are : you can use stock CAT5e networking cables, it's backwards compatible and best of all, it's damn fast. To give you an idea, transferring 125Mb of data would take you 1 second theoretically While transferring the same amount of data through your 54Mbit wireless connection would take you 20 seconds theoretically IF you have a steady connection and are very close to the accespoint. So when you're taking a back-up of your system and transfer it to your back-up server it would go a lot faster over gigabit network then over your stock 100 megabit or 54 megabit wireless network. I hear the question coming, is it expensive? Well you will be amazed how cheap these switches are. You can get fairly cheap and well performing gigabit switches for less then €100. Or at least they say it's well performing, but we shouldn't be ourselves if we wouldn't give it a try. We reviewed a 8 ports gigabit switch from Ovislink a while ago, that was well performing, but it was to over-rated for a home user. It was far more expensive and far more advanced then what most users would need at home. That's why we've gotten a 8 ports gigabit switch from ZyXel.



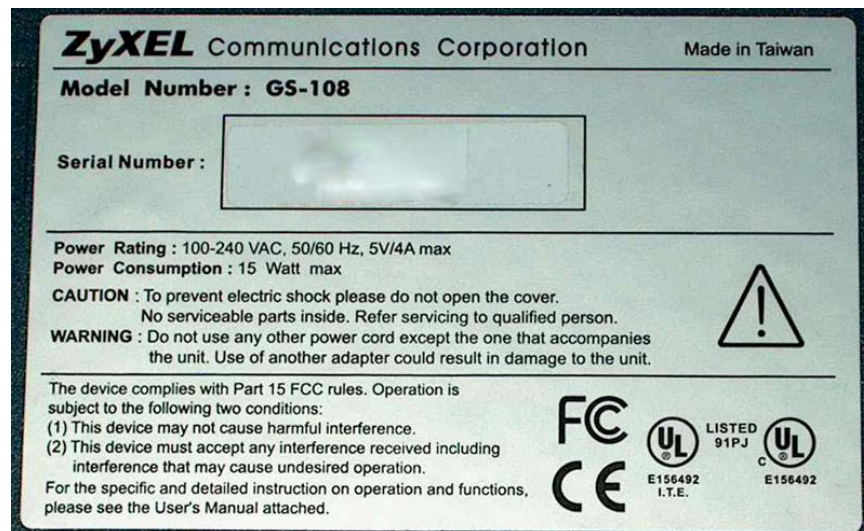
The GS-108

The switch called GS-108 is a low profile office switch with several common used features like MDI/MDIX, so you won't have the problem of having a crossed cable instead of a straight cable. Another user-friendly feature is the complete plug-n-play feature. Just connect the computers and the power brick with the switch and the blazing fast madness can begin. No need for buying gigabit network cards because every non-budget desktop motherboard has gigabit network onboard since more than a year. So what would the average user use this gigabit switch for? Well you can always stream your documents and music simultaneously. When we look at the real average speeds we came to the following conclusion :

a normal gigabit card in a stock 32bit PCI slot will be 54MB/s

a normal 108Mb wireless card in a stock 32bit PCI slot without a WEP encryption will be 6MB/s.

But what happens when the average gigabit networking is done through the Zyxel GS-108 switch? Well the Zyxel doesn't affect the fast speeds of your gigabit network. And with a latency of a mere 200 μ s you can be sure this switch doesn't affect your ping on the internet. The switch gave us speeds of 53-54MB/s which is exactly what we needed. Now I'm even able of streaming a 720p HD movie through my network without it affecting the speed of the other users.





Conclusion

The Zyxel GS-108 is an excellent solution for small home and office applications and is great for the domestic user that just don't know that much of networking. The speeds are very good and it's small enough to fit on any desk. A real must-have even for the average user.

PRO

Small
High speed
Plug n Play

CON

no management

The Zyxel GS-108 deserves an 9/10 !! We would like to thank Valadis (<http://www.valadis.nl>) for sending us the GS-108.

