

By Harry Hare

Cyberoam's NetGenie, a rather smart router



In many modern cultures, a genie is portrayed as a magical being that grants wishes, and for sure Cyberoam's NetGenie will grant your safe surfing wishes. Marketed as a wireless router for families, the NetGenie makes a good effort in providing security settings that will prevent children from visiting unauthorized sites.

The router also features antivirus, intrusion detection, firewall, and web protection that truly go a long way in ensuring a safe online environment at home.

Inside the Box

The NetGenie box comes with the NetGenie base unit, two detachable Wi-Fi antennas, one RJ-45 Ethernet cable, one power adaptor and a quick starter guide. These components are packed neatly and are easily identifiable. Mounting the Wi-Fi antennas on the base unit is also quite easy and there is no need for any prior networking knowledge.

Look and Feel

The NetGenie has a simple design and a blue-grey plastic housing. It comes standard with four 10/100 ports, a wide area network (WAN) port, a USB port for connecting a USB modem or dongle and a dual external antenna. The USB port is especially exciting since a lot of people use USB modems from mobile phone operators. The simple design makes it easy to locate and use the different ports and it can easily form part of a gadget collection in the living room or in a home office.

Setting Up the NetGenie

Setting up the NetGenie was one of the easiest set ups I have ever done: it actually took me longer to open the package than to set up the router. The quick start guide that comes with the router details all the possible scenarios of how you can set it up. There are four possible scenarios: through an ADSL/cable modem, through a direct cable, a USB modem or over Wi-Fi. Setting up any of these scenarios is easy and quick.

I use a cable modem that is split between Internet and cable TV, so I used the cable modem scenario for my setup.

All I had to do was to connect the router's WAN port to a broadband modem and connect my computer to one of the LAN ports. Once the router is powered on and connected to the modem, you open the browser and direct your browser to the default NetGenie IP address. This takes you to the NetGenie administration console.

This is where you configure the router to your specifications. For instance you can make changes to the system settings, configure age-appropriate Internet access for each member of your family, enable antivirus protection, update or change network settings and get statistics and reports.

After setting up your security, network and privacy options you are already online. To connect via a wireless connection, one needs to enter the preconfigured SSID and security key that come with the router. This is found on the base of the router, away from prying eyes.

The Software

Now, this is where the NetGenie becomes truly interesting. It has one of the easiest interfaces around and you can set different people up with different accounts and associate the account with a selection of cartoon avatars. Here you can add users, remove users, and set up each user with different restriction levels of access. One of the features I liked most was the slider on the main administration screen that you can move to correspond to a user's age.

For instance, when you move the slider to "8 years old", that account is set to the highest security restriction zone. This means that account cannot access anything unless it is added to the "allowed" list of sites. If you set the slider to "12 years old" the settings move to a more moderate restriction zone, allowing kids in this age group access to websites that are considered safe for their

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3. Brand Yourself an Expert With “Answers”

One of the most valuable and underused features on LinkedIn is “Answers”, Howes says. This part of the site is a forum where users can propose questions, seek advice and ask for opinions.

“So many users are asking questions about their most painful points in their career or businesses”, he says.

“If you’re an expert in a topic, then you should be answering more questions in order to pick up more clients and grow your business”, he says.

“Answers” is also a good way to contact others who are interested in the same topics as you, says Orsburn.

If you’re looking for a job in the IT industry, for example, search through questions tagged with that category to find one that would showcase your abilities and knowledge in that area.

4. Refresh Your Profile, Even if You’re

Not Job Hunting

Just because you’re not currently looking for a job doesn’t mean your LinkedIn profile should lie dormant.

Keeping your profile updated, Howes says, is essential for maintaining an accurate personal brand, as well as maintaining the potential for new business opportunities.

“If someone wants to do business with you, they are most likely going to do some research about you on the Web”, Howes says.

“It’s important you have everything up to date and portray your profile the way you want it to look.

This means keeping it updated, adding new recommendations and advanced applications to enhance your profile”.

Howes also recommends paying particular attention to the keywords you use in your profile, so you rank higher in searches for your areas of expertise.

5. Make New Connections in 2012

The more quality people you are connected to, the more opportunities that could come your way. This year, focus on growing your network and connecting with new people, Howes says.

“Businesses grow based on your relationships, so you want to keep expanding and growing connections in your immediate and expanded network”, he says.

But be careful when requesting new connections, though. Do your homework on who they are, their past positions and their interests; find common ground; and be sure to craft a personal note requesting to add them to your network, using the information above.

Orsburn recommends spending 10 minutes a day on LinkedIn to see where your efforts take you.

“Start participating in groups and discussions, and start finding new connections to make”, she says. “The payoff will be better business connections in 2012”.

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own set of sites for each age group.

The NetGenie also comes packed with security for port scanning, anomalies and other threats. It checks and reports web activity, application activity, connected users and attempted intrusion. This is in my view where the NetGenie scores against its closest competition. Other standard router management capabilities include an Internet usage meter, diagnostics, port forwarding, VPN passthrough, and very detailed reporting and logging.

Performance and Price

The NetGenie allows 8 user accounts and a total of 10 simultaneous login’s, A user can login from 10 different devices, say a laptop, tablet and a phone. When all security services are on (secure traffic), the router gives you a throughput of 10 Mbps and 20Mbps when just

behind a firewall. This does not compare well with similar routers, which have a higher throughput. For instance the Cisco Linksys E1550 has a throughput of 60Mbps when 5 feet from the device.

The NetGenie is also pricy as it costs US\$ 180 (KSh 16,200), this price includes a 3-year security subscription that includes inbuilt anti-virus, intrusion prevention system, parental control which the company says would cost more if one bought all these services separately.

All in all, the parental control feature in NetGenie makes the router attractive to its target market: families. The bundled antivirus, intrusion detection, port scanning and other security features gives the user confidence and peace of mind when their families are online. For these reasons, we give the NetGenie a thumbs up.