

802.11ac Gigabit Wi-Fi

Theoretical Max Throughput
Heads to 1.3 Gbps

Although it may seem like just yesterday that the final specification 802.11n devices started rolling out, there is already another Wi-Fi specification right around the corner, 802.11ac. As of current specifications, 802.11ac provides wireless throughput rates of at least 1Gbps. However, recently announced devices from Netgear promise theoretical rates of 1.3Gbps. All of this is in comparison to 802.11n, which tops out at a maximum throughput of 450Mbps.

802.11ac, in contrast to 802.11n, uses only the 5 GHz band. This is done because the 2.4 GHz band cannot support the bandwidth required for the 802.11ac specification. 2.4 GHz has only three non-overlapping 20 MHz wide channels in its Wi-Fi specification: 1, 6, and 11. 802.11ac's newfound throughput comes from using 80 MHz channels as opposed to 802.11n's maximum of 40 MHz (and even that 40 MHz can cause problems on the 2.4 GHz frequency).

The move to the 5 GHz frequency allows for the use of those 80 MHz wide channels to provide the aforementioned throughput rate of 1.3Gbps. There is also the possibility for using 160 MHz wide channels to provide up to 2.6Gbps throughput rate. However, it remains to be seen if using channels that wide will come with some of the same limitations of using the 40 MHz wide ones with 802.11n.

The benefits of faster throughputs don't just stop at being able to transfer large files quickly across your wireless network or streaming heavy HD content to devices because, let's face it, if that were the case, most people would be content with their current 802.11n setups. Allowing more bandwidth means that there will be less interference overall resulting in more effective coverage and fewer dead zones.

Netgear is also including a technology called "Beamforming" with their draft 802.11ac device. Beamforming simply means that instead of the wireless signal transmitting in an omnidirectional pattern at all times, it will intelligently direct the signal toward a device.

As was stated earlier, Netgear is preparing to launch the first

802.11ac wireless router in the second half of 2012. The good news? It will be backward compatible with 802.11n at the 5 GHz band. The bad news? There are no receiving devices on the market yet — meaning you won't be able to take advantage of that new speed until there are devices such as phones, etc. that have the new 802.11ac chipset inside. The retail price of Netgear's new device is set at \$199.99.

Keep in mind though that early 802.11n draft devices were not compatible with the final specification. I know many people that got burnt buying pre-draft 802.11n devices because they thought that they could be upgraded when the final specification came out. Just something to keep in mind.

...by ryan711

URL: <http://bit.ly/MPRxMe>

Amiga Badmouthing

Like a lot of Amiga enthusiasts, I periodically visit websites like Amiga-dot-org, though it's frequently an annoying, if not outright frustrating procedure. It's not the sites themselves, but the users. There are the

argumentative and the trollish, and a few just plain jerks. That's nothing out of the ordinary, and easily found pretty much anywhere on the Internet. What I find more bothersome personally is the shift in attitudes regarding Amigas by the site posters—at least taken as an average. I find frequent bad-mouthing of the Amiga platform, classic and recent, blue or red, seemingly regardless of variation. There's nothing wrong with criticism and realism—I know as well as any that even the most modern Amiga-based operating systems don't reach the same capacity and software support of Windows, Mac, and Linux machines, but I don't go belittling those who use "lesser" systems for whatever reasons they want (at least not any more). This is an increasingly common practice on the websites though. Anyone who talks or asks about using Amiga / Morph / AROS for any kind of "serious" usage is subject to criticism, even insults, for bothering to do so by those who imply pointlessness to the endeavor, and the platform itself.

I struggle to grasp exactly why so many take this attitude when they are supposedly Amiga users and

fans themselves. Assuming they are not just trolls trying to stir the pot, my best guess for this phenomenon is an increase in the percentage of site posters whose Amiga usage is primarily retro and gaming based, or primarily emulation as opposed to hardware usage. An Amiga interest limited to very specific areas can produce a similarly limited view of the platform. I know it's an easy attitude to develop—I've had the same sort of thing myself on occasion. I used to look down my nose at those people who worked to graft things such as USB support or Internet browsing to old 8-bit Commodore and Atari systems. I wondered why they bothered when easier options were available, just as others undoubtedly wonder the same about anyone who might use an Amiga or clone system when a Windows machine would be easier in a "keeping up with the world" sense. Being on both sides have helped me to understand it's a matter of preference and finding enjoyment in what you do and what you use, and if someone is satisfied with what they have it's not my place to tell them they're wrong.

There are more and more people out there as computer platforms lose their identity to commodity status who might never understand, and that's a pity in itself. So if you have to deal with some on-line presence who spouts that Amiga (or any platform for that matter) is crap because it doesn't run some flavor-of-the-month game or application or web page, feel free to pity their inability to appreciate the barebones muscle-car experience while they tool around in their smooth, soulless sedan with the touch-screen in the dashboard. Or something like that.

...by Eric Schwartz
from the AmiTech Gazette,
August 2012

September Calendar

September 10 — Amiga-By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 PM — Main Grand Prairie Library
901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

September 10 — Board of Director's Meeting
Approximately 9:15 PM — Location TBD

September 10 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

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