

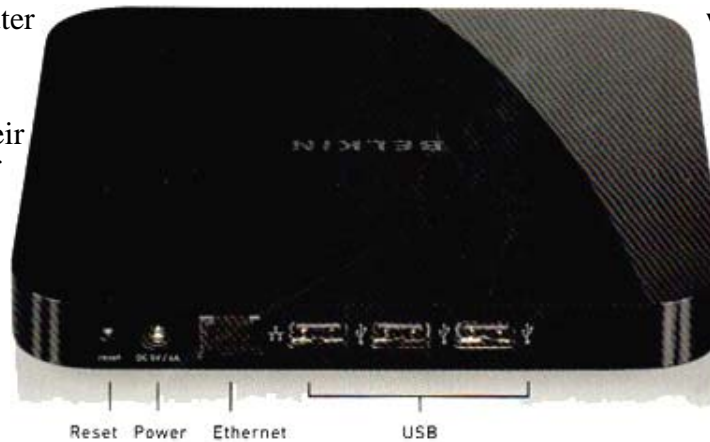
Belkin Network USB Hub

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With a notebook computer you can work or play unfettered by the jangle of wires found on less portable machines. The illusion of wireless computing is broken as soon as you wish to connect to an external hard drive, printer, media reader, iPod, or other peripheral device. Most notebook computer users plug these peripherals into the open USB ports on their machines. When all of your peripherals are plugged in, its unfettered movement is replaced with an octopus of wiring that creates the look of a machine on life support.

The Belkin Network USB Hub makes it possible for you to have access to your USB connected peripherals without attaching any wires to your computer. To go wireless you load the Belkin software, plug your peripherals into the USB ports on the Belkin network hub, run an Ethernet cable from the hub to your wireless router, and then follow a few simple instructions to get the “plug and play” on your computer to recognize your peripherals that are now on your Belkin network.

This network can support up to sixteen connections at the same time; a plus since multifunction devices will create a connection for each of their functions. After hookup your computer, or computers, will have wireless access to your peripherals from



any location that is within range of your wireless connection. Your computer sees a direct USB port connection for each peripheral; so device functionality is the same as if each device was directly plugged into a USB port on your computer.

The Belkin software must be installed for the hub to work. This Network hub supports multiple users with the restriction that only one computer at a time can access each peripheral that is attached to the hub. To test the Belkin unit, I connected a Cannon

Inkjet, HP Inkjet, Sandisk ImageMate (5 in 1) card reader, and an Iomega 80 GB backup hard drive. All of these devices and their respective software operated flawlessly even when I worked fifty feet away from my wireless router. Since your wireless router connection isn't as fast as a real hard wired USB port connection, Belkin warns that its network USB hub might not support peripherals that demand a higher speed and bandwidth than your wireless router can provide.

Recalling the Facts

1. How does this hub change the way you connect peripherals to your computer?
2. How does this device communicate with your wireless router?

*Dr. Alan J. Pierce is co-author of **Introduction to Technology Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2005** and a **TechDirections Magazine** Columnist. Visit www.techtoday.us for past columns and resources.*