# Qnap TS-239 Pro

**Graham Morrison** looks at a NAS box that looks like it's going to put up a good challenge to the award-winning Synology DS209+II.
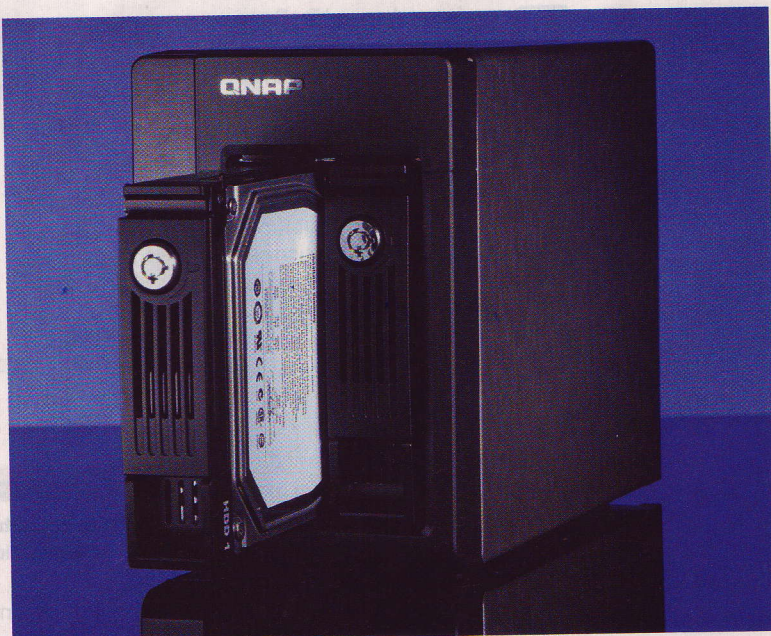
There are two things that strike you as impressive when you pull the weighty Qnap TS-239 Pro from its box. First, it's got an Intel Atom sticker on the side, and second, there's a VGA port on its rear panel, alongside two Ethernet, two high-speed external SATA ports and two removable drive caddies that provide up to 4TB of storage. NAS devices, it seems, are no longer headless zombies sitting in the corner of the room.

But our first problem is an old one. Despite this being a Linux machine, there is no Linux version of the client application that's required to detect your NAS box. Fortunately, the solution was staring us in the face. We plugged a screen into the VGA port and, after a lengthy boot process, the machine was sensible enough to display the unit's IP address. Stick this address into a browser and you're ready to go.

In the year since we last looked at a Qnap device the company has overhauled its web interface. It's now a super-smooth Ajax affair, using an approximation of Apple's Cover Flow to



> The TS-239 is so heavy and solid that it feels as though it could withstand a nuclear attack without either drive sliding out of the front.

## "It has more in common with your desktop than a typical NAS box."

switch between the various modes the NAS has to offer. These modes are enabled and disabled through the first option, labelled Administration, and

they provide quick access to the most common features. These include a file manager, media portal, a web server wizard, a download manager and a surveillance station for monitoring attached and compatible webcams. Enter the Administration mode and you get a hierarchical display of all the additional functionality embedded within the box, including FTP, *Samba*, UPnP streaming with *TwonkyMedia*, *MySQL* access and *iTunes* downloads.

## Different strokes

What differentiates the TS-239 Pro is its hardware specification. With a mainstream 1.6GHz CPU and 1GB of memory, it's well suited to running a server for web pages, files or emails.

After accessing the box through SSH, we found that only 378MB RAM was being used with a default installation, which should leave you with plenty of space for your own apps. You can also install a wide selection of packages through the QPKG format, including *Asterisk*, *Tomcat*, Python, *WordPress*, *Joomla* and *Squeezebox*. A single package will also install the *Itsy Package Management System*, which opens the NAS to the same vast

collection of third-party packages available to the Synology device.

It's difficult not to like the TS-239 Pro. It's an expandable box that has more in common with your desktop machine than a typical NAS box, and it easily wins the specification battle against the Synology device. But the DS209+II still beats it in several important areas: it uses *Ajax* better, has the slight edge when it comes to *Samba* performance, and is quieter than the Qnap box. But it's a tough choice. If you're in the market for a decent NAS, either will do the job nicely. **LXF**

## Features at a glance



**Connectivity**
Alongside the VGA connector that turns this box into a computer are also two ultra-new high-speed eSATA ports.



**Web interface**
The new web interface to the box is powerful and easy to use, and is a massive improvement over the old version.

## Linux Format Verdict

**Qnap TS-239 Pro**

**Developer:** Qnap
**Web:** www.qnap.com
**Price:** £389.65

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|---|---|
| Features | 10/10 |
| Performance | 9/10 |
| Ease of use | 7/10 |
| Value for money | 7/10 |

» *A seriously capable NAS that's best suited to more serious installations.*

## Rating 8/10