

NetAlly LinkRunner AT 4000



PRODUCT REVIEW PRODUCT REVIEW PRODUCT R

Since their introduction over two decades ago, NetAlly's LinkRunner® AT network cable testers have become the go-to tool for network engineers - and they just got even better. The latest LinkRunner 3000 and 4000 models take everything that made their predecessors famous and add a wealth of new and valuable features.

The LinkRunner AT 3000 is a direct replacement for the 1000 and 2000 models while the LinkRunner AT 4000 on review takes over from the G2. Both offer advanced copper NBase-T and fibre cable testing facilities which the 4000 expands on with network discovery, periodic AutoTests, HTTP/FTP response measurements, path analysis and packet capture.

There's much more, as both models offer network switch and Power over Ethernet (PoE) testing capabilities. They can automatically detect and run diagnostics on switches to provide information such as their name, data rate, port number plus VLAN ID, and support the 802.3af/at/bt standards, all classes from 0 to 8 and Cisco's proprietary UPoE.

Using the LinkRunner AT 4000 couldn't be easier as it runs NetAlly's embedded Android-based OS and will appeal to novices as well as technicians. The bottom line is if they can use a mobile then they'll have no problems with the LinkRunner AT 4000.

The 5in. colour touchscreen presents icons for

swift access to all tasks and you can install other third-party Android apps as well. The screen's FAB (floating access button) opens action menus offering instant access to further analysis tools related to the selected task.

The unit includes a default profile for quick one-tap tests of wired networks, and after only 20 seconds it reported back with an impressive amount of network information. This is presented as 'cards' colour coded to indicate warnings or errors and you can tap on any of them and drill down for more details.

With the PoE test enabled in the profile and a class selected, it showed details of power delivery and the measured voltage under load for our Netgear 48-port PoE+ Smart switch. You can easily customise AutoTest profiles, place them in groups, add new ones and enable periodic tests using preset or custom intervals.

As you'd expect, cable tests are in abundance and just as easy to run. For unterminated cables, it reports back on the measured length plus shorts, splits and opens with the optional Wiremapper accessory identifying split pairs, crossover cables, normal or negative pair polarity and shielded cables.

The Discovery tool presented us with a card for every device on our network which we could tap on to pull up more detail such as their network interfaces, addresses and where appropriate, SNMP agent uptime. The integral

iPerf app can run performance tests to the NetAlly iPerf accessory or a system hosting an iPerf server.

The LinkRunner AT 4000 works directly with NetAlly's Link-Live cloud portal for topology mapping and analytics. Its smart interactive dashboard view provides technicians with an 'at a glance' snapshot of what is happening on their networks.

After claiming the LinkRunner 4000 for our account, we could upload test results and packet capture data. Many test results are uploaded automatically to the portal and used for further analysis and report creation, and the device can be remotely controlled securely from Link-Live or VNC where the technician is presented with a precise representation of its screen.

NetAlly's LinkRunner AT 4000 raises the bar for cable testing and network analysis as it delivers a remarkably powerful set of diagnostics and troubleshooting features in a ruggedised handheld device. Its large screen and Android-based OS make it incredibly easy to use, it integrates seamlessly with NetAlly's Link-Live cloud portal and with prices starting at around £3,225, is very affordable. **NC**

Product: LinkRunner AT 4000
Supplier: NetAlly
Web site: www.netally.com
Telephone: +44 (0)115 865 5676
Price: From £3,225 exc VAT