DATATALE 2-BAY RAID SYSTEM

Data Critical Backup
By Muzaffar Ismail

After trying out Onnto's DataWhale 2-Bay RAID System (HWM January 2009) we were wondering what other external backup device would come our way.

We were pleasantly surprised this month with the RS-M2QO DataTale 2-Bay RAID System. Featuring the ability to support two bays of up to 2TB 3.5" SATA hard disk drives each, the system offers RAID 0, RAID 1 and JBOD functionality at the flip of a switch.

The DataTale is an upright aluminum box with an 80mm x 80mm fan stuck at the bottom. The hard disk drives are placed above this fan, allowing hot air to rise out through a vent near the top of the casing. The top lid itself slides open to reveal extremely easy instructions on how to set the RAID switch. The overall design of the DataTale is simple and efficient, while the white aluminum casing is pleasing to the eye.

Instead of trays, the DataTale uses screw-on guides which double as handles, allowing easy removal and insertion of any hard disk drive. Connection-wise the DataTale has a USB2.0 port, eSATA port, 1394a port and 1394b port for almost any form of data connection available.

Thankfully, Onnto have included all four cables for each port. Beside these ports is a RAID mode switch which allows you to set the hard disk drives to RAID 0, RAID 1 or JBOD with ease. All you need to do is follow the instructions underneath the lid and plug in the cables to make the DataTale an external RAID enclosure which is very easy to use.

In terms of performance the enclosure works fine, allowing for RAID 0 or RAID 1 with ease. We tested the DataTale on USB2.0, eSATA and 1394b cables and got reasonable results for all. In PCMark05's hard disk drive test suite the DataTale scored 1922 for USB, 2627 for eSATA and 1376 for 1394b.

Obviously, this means if you have eSATA, the DataTale is perfect for you and if you're running a Mac you can always use the FireWire 800 port and cable which is double the performance of the 1394b or FireWire 400 port.

Transfer speeds were good regardless of cable (using the eSATA cable did get a bit faster) with about 1GB in data taking about 45 seconds to copy over. Based on the settings of the RAID mode switch on the DataTale, the enclosure will make sure that should the first hard disk fail or become corrupt, you can always rebuild using the DataTale's secondary hard disk drive. Thanks to the DataTale's design, the casing stays cool under load and the fan is barely audible when turned on. This and other factors combine to make the DataTale RS-M2QO 2-Bay RAID system perfect for high-powered execs or System Admin who handle critical data on a daily basis as it backs up data quickly and has a RAID backup system in place for double the safety.

SPECIFICATIONS

Drive bays	Ports	Type	Price
2 (up to 4TB)	USB / eSATA / 1394a / 1394b	External RAID Enclosure	RM 590

Model: RS-M2QO
Interface: USB2.0 / eSATA
Drive Bays: 2 x 3.5" SATA hard disk drives (up to 2TB each)
RAID Modes: RAID 0 (Triping), RAID 1 (Mirroring), JBOD
Transfer Speeds: Up to 3Gbit/sec (eSATA), Up to 480Mb/sec (USB2.0), Up to 400MB/sec (1394a), Up to 800Mb/sec (1394b)
LED Indicator: Power, Connection, Health, Access, Rebuild
Dimensions: 126mm x 138mm x 213mm
Weight: 1.35kg
Warranty: 1-year
Contact: Ideatools Technology Sdn Bhd
Telephone: (03) 5121 7245
URL: www.onnto.com

Comes with four types of connections each with its own cable

The screw-on guides are easy to install

HWM'S VERDICT

Physique:	9.0
Performance:	8.5
User Friendliness:	8.5
Value:	8.5

8.5
Out of 10

A simple but efficiently designed external RAID hard disk enclosure for those handling critical data

HWM SILVER AWARD