

Nominee: Drobo

Nomination title: The Simple, Safe, & Secure Drobo 5N2 Makes It Easy to Protect Your Data

The Drobo 5N2 is the latest generation, five bay Network Attached Storage (NAS) that delivers an unparalleled user experience for data sharing, secure backup, remote access and disaster recovery solutions. One of the 5N2's key distinguishing features is DroboDR (Disaster Recovery), which seamlessly allows users to keep their data safe and provides zero downtime for mission critical applications. The upgraded Marvell Armada Quad core 1.6Ghz processor is backed by 2GB of memory, which allows for better performance

In consumer tests, particularly the ATTO disk benchmark test, the results showed that the 5N2 topped out at the limit of 100MB/s for reads and writes independent of the type of mix of drives. This is thanks to our BeyondRAID technology that seamlessly builds a RAID solution for maximum performance independent of drive maker and drive size.

The user-friendly dashboard makes all administration tasks a single click away. For example, switching from the default single disk redundancy to dual redundancy is no more complicated than a single mouse click.

The most tangible impact the 5N2 has had on our customers is simplicity. Drobo's BeyondRAID technology makes the setting up and maintenance of the 5N2 so much easier than the conventional RAID systems used in other NAS devices. It literally is a matter of loading up the 5N2 with any drives you have on hand, downloading the software, and installing it. It's also incredibly easy to maintain. Adding capacity to the 5N2 is just a matter of inserting a drive to an empty drive bay or if there is no empty bay, just remove the lowest capacity drive and fit the larger one in -- all on the fly.

The 5N2 is the fastest, network attached Drobo available to prosumers and provides up to 2x performance boost with an upgraded processor and the Ethernet port bonding option.

The 5N2 is also equipped with dual Gigabit Ethernet ports for network connectivity and makes sharing your data easy by connecting directly to the network. The two ports provide bonding support, also known as Adaptive Link Bonding, for link failover and aggregation without Ethernet switch support. This increased performance can compensate for network connection problems.

The major differentiator between the 5N2 and our competitors is our award-winning simplicity. It is by far, the easiest to use NAS on the market for three simple reasons.

First, by implementing a level of automation usually preserved for more expensive solutions, and still maintaining the award-winning simplicity found in all Drobos, customers can get up and running quickly unlike competitive solutions that require a lot more configuration and setup.

Second, compared to other NAS devices on the market, the design and build quality of the 5N2 is superior. The Drobo has an overall more robust casing around its metal skin, with metal separating each drive bay. When compared to our competitors, the fit and finish become most apparent when the cover to the drives is removed - the cover for the Drobo uses magnets and as such, attaching the Drobo cover is easy. One of the 5N2's most outstanding features is how the case design and drive status are perfectly integrated. Every drive has a large LED oval - a green light indicates that everything is working as it should. If it's lit up red, something you can see from across the room, then there's a problem. Drive failures are visibly obvious. The 5N2 also boasts an impressive array of smaller LEDs, located at the bottom of the drive. These LEDs light up as the storage capacity fills up. If the LED bar reaches a quarter of the way along the base of the device, you know your 5N2 is 25% full.

Third, Drobo doesn't just protect you from a drive failure, it also protects against potential data loss after a power outage. Drobo 5N2 includes a battery that safeguards all data in memory, or cache, that is on its way to the drives. When power spontaneously goes away, the battery keeps the Drobo alive long enough for the data to be written to nonvolatile storage -- thus protecting any in process writes from being lost. Once power is restored, the data in nonvolatile storage is seamlessly transferred to the drives.

All of these features make the Drobo 5N2 the perfect storage solution for professionals and consumers who want peace of mind that their data will always be protected.

Why nominee should win

A proven commitment to simple, safe, and secure storage solutions to protect customers' data.

BeyondRAID technology makes setup and configuration a snap compared to other RAID solutions.

Enterprise level performance for the consumer market that gives users peace of mind knowing their data is safe.

A Disaster Recovery (DR) solution that is simple to setup and provides zero downtime for mission critical storage.

Continued innovation with eight new products introduced in the last two years.