

802.11B WIRELESS ACCESS POINT

# Asus SpaceLink WL-300 WAP

Enhance your wireless network with a stylish wired access point that can be tucked away almost anywhere



**INFORMATION**

**PRICE** £145 **EX VAT** £124  
**SUPPLIER** Komplett.co.uk  
**PHONE** N/A  
**WWW** Komplett.co.uk

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**COMPLIANCE** 802.11b, speeds up to 11MBps. Supports 128-bit WEP encryption with 4 user-defined keys

**L**ike most wireless access points these days, the SpaceLink WL-300 uses internal antennae rather than relying on bulky and inconvenient external aerials. In this case, the WL-300 has two internal dipole antennae for improved reception and transmission, and also comes with the facility to connect to a separately available external directional antenna via the well-hidden port on the rear.

**Off the wall**

The end result is a stylish piece of kit which can stand vertically as well as

lying flat. Better yet, Asus supplies two brackets for mounting the WAP either on a wall or office partition or on the ceiling. This is nice forward thinking on the part of Asus, as way too many competing products are bulky and difficult to site – there are even sticker templates in the box to help you screw the brackets to the wall.

Operating ranges quoted by Asus are the same as for the WL-100 PCMCIA card reviewed this issue, with a theoretical maximum of 1500 feet when outdoors. Needless to say you can't situate the WAP outside, and these figures refer to the overall network speed. As we mentioned in the WL-100 review, both transmission range and network speed were excellent when the two items were used together – Asus has obviously done its research well.

**Excellent software**

The software supplied with the WAP includes drivers and an excellent utility called the AP Manager. This makes it extremely simple to read and change

the WAP's settings with very little effort, and lifts the product above many cheaper – and in some cases, more expensive – competitors which rely on obscure tools to alter settings.

The WL-300 WAP performed extremely well in our tests when used with the WL-100 PCMCIA card, and sits close to the top in terms of performance we've observed as we've tested these devices over the last year. It's solid and reliable with good software, and the ability to wall or ceiling mount the WAP is an obvious bonus in cramped environments.

**Frank Charlton**

**PCPlus verdict**

**SPACELINK WL-300 WAP**

FOR	AGAINST
✓ Excellent performance and ease of use	✗ Manual has translation errors
✓ Can be wall or ceiling mounted	



PCMCIA 802.11B WIRELESS NETWORKING CARD

# Asus SpaceLink WL-100

Hardware manufacturer Asus dips into the wireless networking market with this nifty little laptop card



**INFORMATION**

**PRICE** £82 **EX VAT** £74  
**SUPPLIER** Komplett.co.uk  
**PHONE** N/A  
**WWW** Komplett.co.uk

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**COMPLIANCE** 802.11b, speeds up to 11MBps. Supports 128-bit WEP encryption with 4 user-defined keys

**T**he SpaceLink WL-100 from Asus is the company's latest venture into the wireless networking market. It's a standard Type-II PCMCIA card designed to connect your laptop to an existing wired network without shackling yourself to a desk.

The SpaceLink WL-100 conforms to the slightly older but much cheaper 802.11b WiFi wireless networking standard. This means it's capable of a maximum theoretical transmission speed of 11MBps, rather than the higher 50MBps figures quoted by newer 802.11a equipment.

**Wiggling and jiggling?**

The PCMCIA is small and neat as you'd expect. Unlike many competitors, it features a small hinged antenna which folds away when not in use. As Asus puts it, this means you're "free from jiggling and wiggling your laptop to get a decent radio signal", since you can actually adjust the angle for best reception.

The WL-100 installs easily, and comes with a good selection of software. Other than the drivers – which come supplied for Windows CE 3, PocketPC 2002 and Linux as well as Windows – you get a site survey utility to scan for available networks, a control applet which sits in the System Tray, and an excellent Mobile Manager. This is great if you attach your laptop to more than one wireless network, since it can store multiple configurations and switch on the fly. Asus also includes a useful automatic update facility.

**Long range**

Asus quotes ranges of 130 feet for indoor use and up to a maximum of

1,500 feet on a line of sight basis when outdoors. Many manufacturers use figures like this, but they usually achieve extreme range at the expense of transmission speed. Our tests showed – as usual – that the figures were theoretical maximums, but weren't far from the truth. We comfortably achieved over 1300 feet without losing any speed at all, which is very impressive indeed.

Asus has a fine reputation, and its networking hardware appears to bolster that. Solid, reliable and fast – highly recommended.

**Frank Charlton**

**PCPlus verdict**

**SPACELINK WL-100**

FOR	AGAINST
✓ Efficient adjustable antenna	✗ Antenna can be flimsy
✓ Reliable at longer ranges	✗ Manual could be better

