



PORT NETWORKS

PRESS RELEASE

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PORT NETWORKS OFFERS MARINE WI-FI USERS MORE NETWORKS, FASTER SPEEDS

Baltimore, MD – July 1, 2008 – Two years after introducing its first marine Wi-Fi solution, Port Networks has redesigned its product line to incorporate a new, more powerful transmitter with improved receive sensitivity, a completely rewritten software interface, and upgraded case and cable components. This latest release is Version 6 of the MWB-200 and MWB-250 production sequence.

Like earlier versions, the new designs offer marine Wi-Fi users a way to connect to more networks at faster speeds. The portable MWB-200 can “see” more wireless access points because it resides above deck, where its 5.5dB antenna has better line-of-sight, and because it has more transmit power and receive sensitivity than the Wi-Fi adapters that come built-in to laptop computers. In fact, Version 6 of the MWB-200 has 25 times more signal strength than a standard Wi-Fi adapter, and can move data back and forth at up to 54 megabits per second.

Version 6 of the MWB-250 offers an improved solution for boat owners who prefer a permanently mounted system. It consists of the same powerful transmitter, housed in a rugged aluminum case with an N-type connector for attaching a fixed antenna. Custom antenna kits with 8dB fiberglass and stainless steel antennas, antenna cables, mounts, and connectors are available separately.

New Features in Version 6

Many of the changes introduced in the new designs were suggested by the hundreds of boat owners who have purchased one of the company’s marine wireless solutions since their introduction. Others were made possible by improvements in electronics technology, as Wi-Fi component manufacturers introduce updated designs. New features include:

- *More Powerful Transmitter with Improved Receive Sensitivity* – the transmit power of the MWB-200 has been upgraded from 250 milliWatts to 400 milliWatts, so that it can send its signal even farther in a marine environment. At the same time, receive sensitivity (the ability to hear faint signals from a distant access point) has been enhanced; earlier versions of the MWB-200 could distinguish signals as weak as -84dB, but the new version can distinguish signals as weak as -92dB (in other words, it can pick up signals that are only a quarter as strong). Tests have demonstrated that the new transmitter actually outperforms the 500mW unit formerly available in the MWB-250, so both models now feature the same transmitter.

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- *Completely Re-Written Software Interface* – using an MWB unit is now easier and more intuitive, thanks to a redesigned set of management pages that move the most frequently used functions to a single location. As with earlier versions, all of the unit's functions are controlled through a web interface – there is no software to load. Now, however, users have access to a much larger set of parameters, including country-by-country wireless settings; updated support for both Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP) and Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA & WPA2) security; and traffic shaping. The new interface also includes a visual signal strength meter and automatic password protection.
- *Upgraded Case and Cable Components* – the MWB-200 case now features a separate seal and case lining, for better watertight integrity, and an aluminum mounting plate that supports the transmitter and provides a guide to the diagnostic indicator lights. The data/power cable has been upgraded to military-spec standards, and is now both easier to detach from the MWB-200 and more resistant to twists and kinking. End caps are also provided for both sides of the watertight cable connection. The MWB-250 is now housed in a smaller, more durable powder-coated enclosure, with upgraded mounting hardware.

Enthusiastic Response from Marine Wi-Fi Users

Since their introduction two years ago, the MWB units have been a popular choice among those using the Internet while on the water. Whether they are liveaboards, blue-water cruisers, or simply weekend boaters trying to keep up with email, MWB owners report great results.

“The setup was so simple it scared me. I am picking up between 9-11 AP's where I normally would get only 2 in my slip,” says Larry Jones of St. Augustine, FL. Terry Heil, captain of SV Living Water, says “The product is working really well and I'm very pleased with it. Installation was a snap. I have it hooked up to a Linksys wireless router and the two are getting along quite well. I was using a directional USB antenna before. Now I'm getting at least 3X the throughput.”

The MWB units have also received warm welcome from reviewers in the trade press. Carolina Currents wrote that “We tested the MWB-200 and found it boosted signals that did not even register using a standard laptop Wi-Fi card/antenna system. Connection was straightforward and, since the unit comes pre-configured for use, it connected to the strongest signal automatically right out of the box.”

Ben Ellison, marine electronics expert and the voice behind Panbo, the marine electronics blog, wrote that “I've tried it now in Boston and around Camden Harbor and can say with assurance that it locks in way more Wi-Fi signals than my little Linksys PCMCIA card. It finds available access points automatically, too, though you can use a browser to get into its extensive software and survey what APs are in sight.”

Advantages of the MWB

Connecting a computer to an MWB is as easy as plugging in to a standard network jack at an office. The computer doesn't have to have its own Wi-Fi adapter, or any other special hardware or software. The marine wireless bridge does all the work, connecting to the wireless network and maintaining connections with one or more computers on board.

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The MWB units have several advantages over built-in Wi-Fi, USB adapters, and custom systems:

- **25x More Transmit Power.** Because they incorporate a powerful transmitter and an above-deck antenna, and eliminate any signal loss from a long cable run, the MWB units have far more range than most other Wi-Fi solutions.
- **Flexible Mounting.** The MWB-200 doesn't require a custom installation; in fact, it can be stowed below while under way, and simply placed on deck when a boat is within range of a Wi-Fi network. The MWB-250 offers an easy-to-mount enclosure, and its custom antenna kits provide everything you need for a clean, permanent install. Thanks to their built-in Power-Over-Ethernet technology, both units require only a single network cable between the computer and the MWB.
- **Advanced Networking Features.** Unlike most Wi-Fi adapters, the Marine Wireless Bridges are stand-alone devices on the network, so they include their own internal DHCP server for assigning addresses on the local network and a Site Survey utility for detecting available wireless networks, and they support advanced encryption, including WEP64, WEP128, 802.1x, WPA-TKIP, WPA2-AES & WPA-Mixed.
- **High-Speed Data Transfer.** The MWB units are compatible with both 802.11b and 802.11g access points, so they will work almost anywhere Wi-Fi is available, and will deliver throughput of up to 54 megabits per second.

Pricing & Availability

The portable MWB-200 Version 6 is currently available directly from Port Networks for \$449. That price includes the MWB transmitter unit, a 15 meter (50') data/power cable and a choice of 110 volt or 12 volt power injectors. The permanently mounted MWB-250 is available for \$499; an optional custom antenna kit with 20' cable is \$249, and a second kit with a 50' antenna cable is \$299.

More information about the company's marine wireless bridge products is available from the company's online store, located at <http://store.portnetworks.com>. Customers can also order through the Port Networks toll-free sales number, 877-4PN-WIFI (877-476-9434).

About Port Networks

Port Networks is a privately-held wireless equipment developer and Internet service provider, located in Baltimore, MD. The company was founded in 2003 and serves customers in the marine, residential, and commercial markets.

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Main	Link Setup	Network	Advanced	Services	System	Logout
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WIRELESS LINK SETTINGS

Network SSID:	Port Networks Public Wi-f	MAC Address:	00:11:7C:02:03:BD
Security:	none	QoS Status:	No QoS

To change wireless networks, go to the Link Setup tab.

WIRELESS LINK STATUS

Signal Strength:	-39 dBm	Align Antenna...	
TX Rate:	11.0 Mbps	RX Rate:	11.0 Mbps
Frequency:	2462 MHz	Channel:	11
ACK Timeout:	48	Transmit CCQ:	20.3%
Uptime:	00:37:28	Date:	2008-05-29 12:36:27

NETWORK SETTINGS

LAN Cable:	ON	Host Name:	MWB-250
LAN MAC:	00:15:6D:E0:1C:0C	LAN IP Address:	10.11.12.1
WLAN MAC:	00:15:6D:A6:1C:0C	WLAN IP Address:	216.230.124.97

To change settings go to the Network tab

Version 6 of the MWB-200 features a completely new software interface