

# ZyXEL DMA 1000

It lacks Wi-Fi, but is otherwise an excellent budget video-streaming choice

Although ZyXEL is new to digital media streaming, the firm knows a thing or two about network devices. It isn't surprising, then, that the brand-new DMA 1000 looks more like one of ZyXEL's wireless routers than a piece of hi-fi equipment, but it's still a shame the compact white box may not blend in with your existing gear.

It's also a surprise that there's no Wi-Fi built in – the only connection is a 10/100Mb/sec Ethernet port. This is partly because ZyXEL wants to offer the best possible streaming experience, and partly because it also sells a range of power-line networking products that you could use to connect the DMA 1000 to a router in another room.

On the rear are HDMI, S-Video, coaxial S/PDIF and phono audio outputs, plus a USB port. A cable is included in the box to convert the S-Video and

phono audio connectors to a scart interface, but you don't get an HDMI cable, although that isn't unusual at this price.

While you can use the DMA 1000 with Windows Media Connect, it also comes with DiXiM media server, which allows it to support a few extra formats such as DivX and XviD; these can be played directly both from a USB flash drive or hard disk, too. Our H.264 clip refused to play and the VOB file played for only 30 seconds at a time before a "Playback failed" error message appeared. But we liked the fact that if you do stop a video file halfway through, the next time you play it you can continue from the same point. Fast-forwarding and rewinding were also flawless, even with HD clips.

Music playback is solid, too, with albums being played in the right order



using either Windows Media Connect or DiXiM, and album art appearing when you begin playing a track. Likewise, photo slideshows are intuitive and have simple, yet elegant, dissolve transitions.

There are no internet radio or YouTube functions, but you do get access to DivX's video-on-demand service, although this wasn't working in our early test sample. Another gripe, which we hope will be remedied in a future firmware update, is font size. Unless you have a huge TV, you might struggle to read the button labels and media listings.

But as long as the lack of Wi-Fi doesn't pose a huge problem, the ZyXEL is great value and does its job well.

**PRICE**  
£111 (£130 inc VAT)

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