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# Review Reprint

http://www.adslguide.org.uk/hardware/reviews/2002/q1/
intertex_IX66-edflc.asp

## Intertex IX66-EDFLC Review

### Introduction

Intertex is a Swedish based company, founded in 1982, specialising in tele-communications and security products. Intertex have really taken security seriously and their routers are heavily orientated towards protecting internal users. This review concentrates on the EDFLC model from the IX66 range which, as you will shortly discover, has almost every feature you'll ever need.

### Setup

The IX66-EDFLC has two 10/100Mbps Ethernet ports. This may appear to be fewer than some competitors with 4 or even 8 ports, however, the IX66 does not work in the same way. It has the ability to act as a hardware firewall with one Ethernet port on the inside and one on the outside. This is great news because you don't have to have ADSL to use some of the features of the router. If you are a cable user, the IX66 can be used as a firewall between your computer and your cable modem. Of course, if you do have ADSL, you can simply switch the 'outside' interface from 'ET1' to 'LINE' (which is the ADSL port). Additionally, if you don't have an Ethernet card in your computer, just use the USB port instead with the drivers supplied. The USB connection creates a virtual Ethernet interface on your PC (with an IP address just like a real network card) and does not require CPU processing power to stay synchronised with the local exchange.

*X66-EDFLC Front panel. Downstream speed displayed in photo*

The EXP port is for 'future expansion'. The manual states that this port may be used for remote controlled home appliances in the future. If you purchase the IX66-EDFLC with inbuilt micro-filter, a 'phone' socket is also provided for your telephone. The router comes with a straight and cross-over cat5 cable and RJ-11 ADSL cable. Physical setup involves connecting your ADSL line into the 'LINE' port and a cross-over (or straight depending upon your networking configuration) into 'ET2'. The default IP address is 192.168.0.1.

*IX66-EDFLC Connectors. From left to right: on/off switch, power connector, USB port, 2 Ethernet ports, expansion port, ADSL port,*

The web based config-uration interface is the most professionally designed and easy to use I have ever seen. Throughout the interface, you can click on question mark images for context sensitive help. The entire setup process took me about 20 minutes from opening the box to being online. Although the manual is only available on the Intertex website, most of the help you'll need is embedded on each page. The router is packaged with a small booklet containing everything you need know and do to get online.

*Web Interface -- Network Configuration*

My favourite page is "Network Configuration". The image is dynamic and changes depending upon which interfaces you chose to do what. In the setup above, 'LINE' is set to the Internet (this can be changed to 'ET1' as explained earlier if you connect via some other means, or solely wish to use the IX66 as a firewall) and 'ET2' is connected to my LAN. The router is set to act as a gateway on 192.168.5.1 and also provides DHCP services to internal hosts.
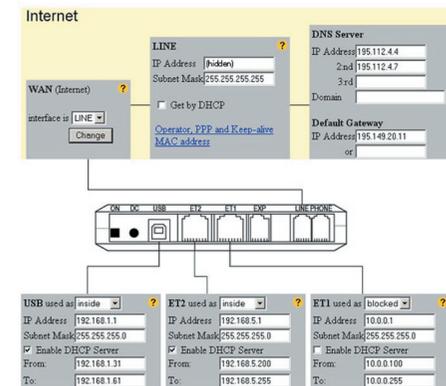
*Web Interface -- Network Configuration*

### Connection Status Information

The IX66 has some impressive statistics and information about the ADSL connection. It is possible to display the current Signal-to-Noise-Ratio value on the illuminated display and also downstream/upstream data rates. All of this data is updated in real-time and as you can see, I would still pass the BT WOOSH test with a 31dB result.

| | Downstream | Upstream | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SNR (Signal-to-Noise-Ratio) margin | 40.8 | NA | dB | ? |
| Line attenuation | 31.4 | 17.5 | dB | ? |
| Errored seconds | 8 | 0 | | ? |
| Loss of signal | 1 | 1 | | ? |
| Loss of frame | 0 | 0 | | ? |
| CRC errors | 8 | 0 | | ? |
| Data rate | 576 | 288 | kbps | ? |

*Webb interface -- Connection*
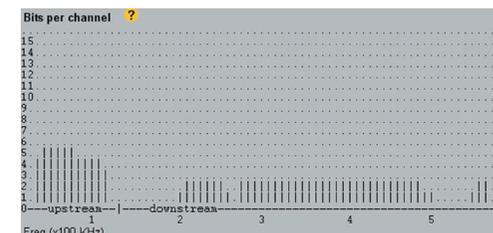
*Web Interface -- Bits Per Channel graph*

The IX66 supports speeds up to 8Mbps downstream, 1.5Mbps upstream so you'll be able to continue using this product for a considerable time into the future.
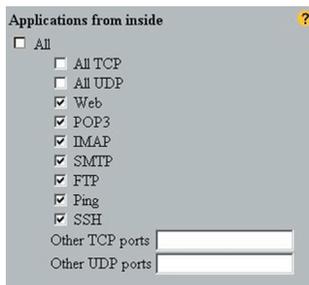
## Security

The IX66 features an easily configurable stateful firewall which, by default, is set to *high security level*. There are four levels, the first three of which can be customised to suit your needs. They are *high*, *low*, *alternate* and *disabled*. Within each profile, logging preferences, port mappings & allowed applications can be specified. The downside is that to perform extensive IP filtering configuration, you have to use the "advanced page" which requires a knowledge of rule definition syntax.

After first setup, you'll probably find that some of your applications such as ICQ do not work. This is because "Hi" security profile only allows a bare minimum set of applications through the router. I started by configuring the *alternate* (AC) security profile and specified "All". This obviously fixes the problem, but you may wish to limit on a per-application basis to help prevent things like spy ware from accessing the Internet.

## Switching Security Profiles

The IX66 provides hardware and software support for switching security profile. If you feel the urge to become ultra-secure all of a sudden, switching your security pro-file can be done at the push of a button.



*Web Interface -- Specifying which applications are allowed to use the connection*
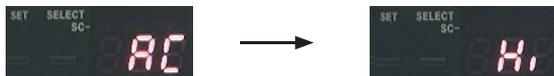


*Switching security profile using the control on the router*

This mimics features seen in programs such as ZoneAlarm where it is possible to quickly restrict Internet access if needs be.

## Error Codes & Logging Information

The IX66 displays a range of codes on the display if a problem arises. This is not only convenient but saves a lot of time for the user. Examples of detected errors include no ADSL link, no Ethernet connection, no DNS servers assigned by your ISP, etc. The router has approximately 2MB of memory available for log files. This is sufficient to store information for a reasonable period of time. Unfortunately, there is no syslog export support

but it is possible to view the contents of the log files and the rest of the file system (appears to be some blend of embedded Linux) by browsing to the 'ls.asp' script file on the web interface.

## Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)

The IX66 range fully supports Session Initiation Protocol. SIP is a relatively new protocol which is designed to allow users to establish direct (pier to pier) connections between each other. We're likely to see applications such as instant messengers and IP telephony supporting SIP in the future for direct data transfers between users. SIP works by managing a set of internal 'subscribers' who are either sending or receiving data from the outside world. When a user wishes to receive data such as an audio stream or instant message, packets are transmitted with information about that current registered individual. If the user is not currently registered on the IX66 router, packets will be rejected as normal.

## Additional Features

The EDFLC and EDFL feature a smart card reader which is designed to read the chip embedded into credit and data cards. Intertex have some IP smart card reader software available on their downloads page.



*Smart card reader as featured on the side of the box*

*Email Notification*
It is possible to enter up to 5 POP3 accounts into the router. When new email is delivered into your mailbox, this is indicated on the front display depending upon which account has mail.
*Lifeboat*
Intertex have a piece of software called "Lifeboat" which will reload a base firmware onto the router even if the entire memory has been wiped. This is done via the USB cable supplied with the router.

## Response Times & Stability

The router produced some great response times. Ping times to my ISPs web server were a reliable 15ms, which is really very good indeed. Although the router never crashed during the week of testing, our *Gamespy server refresh test* slowed the router

down and greatly limited the number of outbound connections that could be made for about 30 seconds however, the router did not fall over and recovered.

## Verdict

The IX66 range of routers are innovative and professionally designed. Intertex have successfully addressed the requirements of the basic computer user all the way through to the expert/computer enthusiast and one of their four models will certainly suit your requirements. Firmware updates are released frequently adding new features and improving existing ones. At £241 and £229, the two top of the range models are competitively priced. The USB model may appear to be overpriced however, as described earlier, it is not a 'winmodem' (i.e. does not require processing power to stay synchronised). With all things taken into account, the IX66 is a 'must have' peripheral for any keen computer user.

| Prices: | £241 - Internet Gate - IX66-EDFLC (featured in this review)<br>£229 - Internet Gate - IX66-EDFL<br>£203 - Internet Gate - IX66-EBFL<br>Prices excl. VAT |
|---|---|
| Links: | http://www.intertex.co.uk/<br>http://www.intertex.se/redirect.asp?iCatID=5 |
| Where to Buy: | C.S.Fordyce Associates Ltd.<br>http://www.csfordyce.com |
| Specs: | http://www.igmanual.com |

http://www.adslguide.org.uk/hardware/reviews/2002/q1/intertex_IX66-edflc.asp

The contents of this review should not be relied upon in making a purchasing decision—You should always discuss your requirements with your service provider and hardware supplier.