

Multiple DigiButlers on the same network

Dear Editor — in part 2 of the DigiButler article (*Elektor* May 2008), it says that you can have only one DigiButler (or more generally, only one server) on your network. However, this is not strictly true – it is actually possible to connect several butlers, and possibly other servers as well, if you use a trick. This is based on the fact that an IP address and port can be accessed from any desired web browser. As noted in the article, to do this you have to enter the IP address assigned by your provider and instruct your router to remap port 80 to port 80 of the IP address of your DigiButler. However, a specific IP address and port can be accessed from any web browser, and you can take advantage of this to allow several butlers to operate on a single network. An example of how this works may help clarify this.

The normal situation when only one DigiButler is connected is as follows:

IP address assigned by provider: 86.131.222.120

DigiButler IP address:

192.168.0.2

Access address in the web browser: 86.131.222.120

Resulting remapping in the router: external port 80 to internal IP 192.168.0.2 with internal port 80

However, it is possible to run two DigiButlers on the same network, and in particular on two ports of your ISP, such as ports 1024 and 27888. The first DigiButler sits on port 1024, and the second one on port 27888. In this case you have:

IP address assigned by provider: 86.131.222.120
DigiButler 1 IP address: 192.168.0.2
DigiButler 2 IP address: 192.168.0.3
DigiButler 1 access address from the browser: 86.131.222.120:1024
DigiButler 2 access address from the browser: 86.131.222.120:27888
Resulting remapping in the



router:

- for DigiButler 1: external port 1024 to internal IP 192.168.0.2 with internal port 80
- for DigiButler 2: external port 27888 to internal IP 192.168.0.3 with internal port 80

Now you can log in to two DigiButlers from any desired location. Naturally, this scheme can also be expanded if your router allows it.

Tim Geerts (The Netherlands)

A really handy trick! It's certainly worth mentioning here. The DigiButler project seems to have gone down well witness the flurry of activity in our forum where you can read how readers got DigiButler to be less hot around the collar (one heatsink) and better prepared to relocate to other IP addresses (DHCP compatibility)! It's exactly the objective we had in mind for these articles: cheap hardware and fun in programming. At the time of writing, about 750 units have been sold. Thanks all for making this a success.

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