

Club Mac Meeting 10/8/10  
Presentation by Frank Murphy  
Subject: Network Range Extenders.

Frank discussed two types of network range extenders, one which boosts the signal of the transmitter (router) and one that boosts the signal at the receiver (computer).

### **Hawking HWREN1 hi-gain wireless-300n range extender (amazon.com \$64.95)**

I needed a range extender to cover a “dead spot” in my home network coverage area. I looked into several extenders and settled on the Hawking described below.

The Hawking device is advertised as being for a Windows-based system. I discussed this requirement with Hawking tech support. They told me that the unit in fact will work with the Mac. The installation CD was written for a Windows computer but they were willing to talk me through the installation. On that promise I purchased the device and called Hawking for assistance. They were very helpful in getting it operational. During the set-up phase the range extender is connected to the computer via ethernet cable. Various Airport settings are transferred to the Hawking, some Hawking settings are tweaked, a name and password are chosen, the ethernet cable is removed, and set-up is finished. The range extender can then be placed anywhere within the range of the router – usually near the area of the dead spot or near the outer limit of the router’s range.

Basic operation: The Hawking range extender receives the network signal from the router, amplifies it, and retransmits it with a different name and IP address. The user sees two network names available and chooses the one with the stronger signal.

### **Wi-Fire 500mw high-gain usb wireless 802.11b g usb wifi adapter (amazon.com \$49.95)**

The Wi-Fire range extender is basically a directional antenna which provides a stronger signal at the receiving end (the computer). Two scenarios for its use: An airport “hot spot” is not as hot as you would like, or your hotel room is a long distance from the office where the wi-fi router is located.

The Wi-Fire unit comes with an antenna, a USB cable and an installation CD. When opened, the Wi-Fire program shows a screen with all the available networks listed along with their relative signal strength. The user can then rotate the antenna to improve signal strength for the network of choice.

Perfect for traveling.