

Axis 2100 Network Camera

NETWORK CAMERA

verdict *An innovative colour network camera that's much more fun than a basic Webcam. Image quality is particularly good and the number of uses it can be put to are endless.*

price £318 (£374 inc VAT)

supplier Axis 020 7553 9200

internet www.uk.axis.com

availability Now

system specifications *Digital network camera, 0.25in Sony RGB CCD sensor, maximum resolution 640 x 480 pixels, 10fps maximum frame rate, Axis ETRAX 100MIPS RISC processor, Axis ARTPEC-1 digital compression chip, 8Mb of RAM, 2Mb Flash PROM, 10/100BaseTX Ethernet port, nine-pin serial port, I/O connector, supports TCP/IP, HTTP, FTP, SMTP, NTP, PPP, ARP and BOOTP, external power unit supplied.*



The Axis 2100 frame rate adapts to the prevailing lighting conditions.

Note, however, that the 2100 isn't totally new as Axis introduced its predecessor, the NetEye 200, back in 1996. At the time, the NetEye was considered an innovative product and, although somewhat belatedly, the 2100 brings in a host of new features. The 2100 is a compact unit measuring a modest 102 x 147 x 41mm (W x D x H) and comes with a small monopod. An LED on the front shows unit status, while two more at the rear reveal power and network status. The network connection is handled by a 10/100BaseTX port at the rear and a nine-pin serial port allows the camera to be accessed via a PPP dial-up connection over a modem link. The I/O connector consists of a four-pole terminal block and adds some useful features. It provides a 24-volt power supply to drive other devices through a relay and digital input and output connectors, which allow external switches to be connected for event-driven applications.

The 2100 just needs an IP address before it can be used, and installation options abound. The quickest method is to use Axis'

IP Installer utility, which searches the network for Axis servers and displays their MAC address. Assign your chosen IP address and the camera can then be accessed directly using a standard Web browser. You can also use ARP (address resolution protocol) from a DOS prompt or connect the camera directly to a PC's serial port. The latter method is bizarre as the camera can only be accessed from a Dial-Up Networking profile using a bogus modem and phone number, which we failed to get working.

The camera's home page provides quick links to installation and administration Wizards. The frame rate adapts to the prevailing lighting conditions and images are stored locally in JPEG format. Different levels of compression can be selected, dealt with by Axis' own ARTPEC-1 chip. Connect a modem or ISDN terminal adaptors to the camera's serial port and you can access it over a dial-up link, as well as configure it to automatically call up a pre-configured ISP and download stored images to an FTP site.

The uses the 2100 Network Camera can be put to are limited only by imagination and can easily add some interest to an otherwise dull Web site. The asking price is quite reasonable considering the level of sophistication while its simplicity makes it a pleasure to use.

Dave Mitchell



For many years, Axis Communications has been at the forefront of thin-server development and has developed a wide range of products that utilise this technology, such as CD-ROM and print servers. The 2100 Network Camera is the latest addition to this exclusive family and is a full-colour, motion camera designed to be accessed over the Internet or an intranet. It can be plugged directly into an Ethernet network and contains an embedded Web server so the images captured can be incorporated into a Web site. This makes it ideal for a range of indoor applications such as security surveillance, site monitoring, as a door camera or as a tool to add flair to Web sites.

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| | FEATURES | ○○○○○○○○ |
| | VALUE FOR MONEY | ○○○○○○○○ |