

Product Review – Linksys PSU4S

By Dirk Hart

A line of storms blew through Mississippi on Super Tuesday and part of the damage it left behind was a Linksys PSU4S. This is a 2-in-1 device that has both a 4 port switch and a USB print server.

One of my customers had attached a USB printer to their brand new PSU4S. They installed the windows drivers on several PCs and noted with satisfaction that the printer printed and the PC users were happy. Then they called to have their Linux server configured.

Happily I edited the CUPS printer config file, `/etc/printers.conf` and added a section for the purchasing printer. The most interesting line looked like this:

```
DeviceURI socket://10.0.0.150:9100
```

I restarted CUPS with `/etc/init.d/cups restart` and sent a print job. That's when things got interesting.

Not only does this device not take print jobs in such an obvious fashion, but *this CRASHES the print server!!!* Yep, I couldn't ping that device, I couldn't traceroute nor telnet to that device. Even worse the user whose PC was attached to one of the switch ports was disconnected from the network.

Frowning and muttering I read the manual. Indeed, there are only two ways this print server accepts print jobs. By email (!) and by IPP. IPP is the Internet Print Protocol and it works on port 631. Easy enough I thought – I'll just configure CUPS again and we'll be free once again to dodge thunderstorms and twisters.

I changed printers.conf again and changed the salient bits to read

```
DeviceURI ipp://10.0.0.150
```

This was a huge, huge improvement in that it didn't crash the print server. Unfortunately there was no printing either Perplexed, I was reduced to calling tech support. I complained that the print server wasn't working, they said it didn't support linux. What linux, I said, the print server talks IPP and the linux server is configured for IPP printing. This is where things went from interesting to laughable.

It turns out that Linksys has built IPP into the windows driver. IPP is not happening on the device, it happens on your PC. You can't direct IPP to the PC that has the drivers installed and you can't use IPP to print to this device. This is NOT an IPP device.

I'd give this device a 5 out of 10, Dick, but it doesn't do IPP, you can't use it across a network and you can easily make the entire device crash. It doesn't have a good beat and it doesn't dance to Linux.