

by Alan J. Pierce, EdD

Mini Pocket Router (TP-Link TL-WR700N)

Most hotel rooms provide wired internet service through a network cable which is usually located on a desk in the room. To acquire wired service you just plug this cable into the Ethernet socket on your computer. This arrangement is fine if you only want to work at the desk that they provide. If you want internet access anywhere in the room, for all your Wi-Fi enabled communication devices,



you need a wireless router. The TP-Link WR700N is a pocket sized wireless router that can instantly convert that lonely network cable into a secure WPA/WPA2 encrypted wireless modem, that can serve all of your Wi-Fi enabled devices at the same time.

The TP-Link is physically 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ X 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ X 1 inch in size. It is a 150 Mbps wireless N router that is definitely small enough for you to keep in your luggage so it is always available when you travel. When you get to your hotel room you just need to plug in the room's network cable into the TP-Link's Ethernet socket and then plug the entire TP-Link unit into a 110 volt electrical outlet. See photo again.

Your setup of the wireless network is now complete. You just need to search for the TP-Link Wi-Fi network on your computing device. From the list of available networks select it and enter your personal password. The password is printed on the TP-Link's label. You are now ready to communicate wirelessly with all your devices.

The signal appears to be strong enough to give you coverage in a multi-room suite. Keep in mind that the nearest hotel room electrical outlet needs to be very near to the room's Ethernet cable. If close is not close enough you will need an extension cord to get things working.

You will still need to pay any fees that your hotel charges for internet access. Since the unit is so small and it is directly plugged into the hotel room's electrical outlet you don't want to forget to take it with you when you leave the hotel.

*Alan is co-author of **Introduction to Technology** Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2010 and a **TechDirections Magazine** Columnist . Visit www.technologytoday.us for past columns, reviews, and resources.*