

Topfield TF6000PVRE

The first Topfield with a LAN interface



If you have ever tried to transfer a recording from a PVR to a PC you most likely had to use a USB 2.0 connection. Unfortunately there are limits to the transmission capacity and above all to the maximum cable length

with this type of connection, so it is not the method of choice for all users – particularly, if the PVR and the PC are located in different rooms. Some months ago South Korean manufacturer Topfield offered a solution by

introducing the TF6000PVR, the first PVR equipped with WLAN. TELE-satellite presented this receiver with a test report in issue no. 192.



Now there is the same model with an Ethernet interface, hence the suffix E in the model description. On the outside, the new receiver looks just like the TF6000PVR and the TF5000 PVR Masterpiece, because Topfield has opted for the same elegant case. The front panel comes with a VFD display which includes the channel number, channel name, receiver status and an indicator showing the number of recordings.

The box comes with an 80 GB hard disk, which allows for 40 to 50 hours of stored material. The hard disk is so silent you hardly notice it's on. On the back panel we find all our usual suspects, which include two LNB inputs with looped-through outputs, three RCA sockets for stereo audio and video, an S-Video socket and a component output as well as an optical audio output, an RS-232 interface and a USB 2.0 interface.

Major functions like standby, audio volume and channel switching can be controlled with the help of five buttons on the front panel, and the usual two CI slots are located behind a flap. The CI slots accept all conventional modules like Irdeto, Seca, Nagravision, Cryptoworks, Viaccess, etc.

The remote control that comes with the settop box is of top quality and features cleverly laid out and clearly labelled buttons. The included Topfield manual gives detailed explanations regarding all functions of the box and guides you through all the settings that can be configured. A whole chapter is dedicated to configuring a network router in connection with the TF6000PVRE.

Everyday use

If you're not happy with the English on-screen menu all you need to do is choose another language. The available options are German, French, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch, Polish and Finnish. This Topfield receiver supports DiSEqC protocols 1.0, 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 (USALS) which means it can be used with a simple multifeed antenna just as well as with a DiSEqC rotating dish or a Wavefrontier antenna with 16 LNBs.

Unfortunately the pre-stored satellite and transponder lists are not fully up-to-date so, if required, some entries will have to be configured manually. The TF6000PVRE is fit for the C and Ku bands and even exotic LNBs need not worry you thanks to the

possibility of manual LOF configuration.

Thanks to using two fully independent tuners it was possible in our test to combine two totally different antenna setups. Tuner 1 was connected to a DiSEqC motor while tuner 2 allowed quick channel zapping as it was connected to the 14 receivable satellites on our Wavefrontier antenna. Once the initial setup is completed we turn to filling up the channel memory, which is a little on the low side with capacity for only 5000 channels.

Then again, the extremely quick channel search made up for this limitation – with an 80-transponder satellite it took only three minutes with activated network scan. Of course you're free to select a manual search, if you so desire, and for the die-hards among you there is even a manual PID input available.

The receiver's system settings allow various types of video output, including CVBS, RGB, S-Video and YUV for PAL or NTSC. In this menu, you can also adjust the automatic configuration of the integrated real-time clock which keeps the correct time even after a power failure. As there are some providers which transmit an incor-

rect time signal over satellite, it is possible to block out individual transponders by limiting the automatic clock adjustment to certain pre-defined transponders.

We have come to expect a fantastic channel switching speed from Topfield and this receiver makes no exception: less than a second after selecting a new channel both audio and video are perfectly in sync. Thanks to the two individual tuners two events can be recorded at the same time while a third live or recorded event can be watched. The on-screen menu and the user interface have been taken over from the Topfield Masterpiece and TF6000PVR, which – according to our opinion – was a good and wise move because this way Topfield guarantees consistency and uses an OSD that has proven its worth again and again in earlier tests.

Like all receivers we test the TF6000PVRE had to demonstrate its reception skills under less-than-perfect conditions. Unfortunately, it was not able to lock into our SCPC test transponder on EUTELSAT SEASAT 36° East with a symbol rate of just 1 Ms/s. It takes some 2 Ms/s for the box to lock into a signal successfully and to process it flawlessly. Very weak signals are less of a challenge for



the TF6000PVRE as it passed tests with BBC on Astra2D in Munich and EUROIRD2 in Vienna. What we did not like, however, was the fact that the signal and quality meter delivers unreliable values at times.

The perfect overall picture of this receiver is rounded off with the built-in teletext decoder and the user interface which is thought through to even the smallest detail. The TF6000PVRE can also take over as an MP3 jukebox, playing songs that have been transferred onto its hard disk using either the Ethernet or USB interface. MP3 files are played back without a glitch and there is even the option of creating personalised playlists.

Thanks to the so-called TAP (Topfield Application Program) interface Topfield is the first manufacturer to allow a truly innovative feature on its receivers: TAP is an open programming interface which amateur or professional software designers can use to develop their own little applications which can be run on the receiver.

So far, there are dozens of tools for various fields of application and ranging from the permanent display of the time on the front panel and changes to the display all the way to creating an automatic bookmark whenever the playback of a recorded event is stopped. Of course professional programmers have come into the picture by now as well, resulting in alternative program guides being available which include managing the archive of recordings and many other little gadgets that address specific features of the PVR and make using the TF6000PVR even easier.

On the Topfield website www.i-topfield.com the company offers the free Vega software for editing the channel list on a PC. All channel list data are read out and transferred to a PC via the RS-232 or USB interface, are then conveniently edited on the PC and later transferred back to the receiver's own channel memory. If you want to copy recordings from the receiver's hard disk to a PC using the USB 2.0 interface you can use the Altair file manager.

As Topfield places great emphasis on continually improving its receiver software there are three ways of updating the software:

using the RS-232 interface, using a USB connection or conveniently via satellite.

Network interface

The single most innovative feature of the TF6000PVRE is its Ethernet interface. The receiver supports the DHCP protocol which means the TF6000PVRE can automatically obtain an IP address from a router or can manually be assigned a permanent IP address by a user. The box comes with an integrated web server and an FTP server, both of which allow accessing the box from a local area network or even from the Internet. Using an example configuration the Topfield manual explains in detail which settings have to be selected so that remote access can easily be established.

On a PC that is connected to the Internet all you have to do is key in the receiver's IP address in the browser's address field and immediately the receiver's webpage will appear on screen. This is the Topfield webpage some might know from the TF6000PVR. Apart from deleting and renaming recordings on the receiver's hard disk it is also possible to copy recordings from the receiver to the PC. In addition, timer entries can be added, edited or deleted and recordings can be started or stopped. A status display shows the current operating mode of the TF6000PVRE.

The integrated FTP server allows easy access to the recordings that are saved on the receiver's hard disk. Either anonymous access can be selected to only download files, or personalised access to download and upload files like MP3 songs, for instance. For personalised and password-protected access a user has to be defined on the receiver who is granted rights to read and write on the hard disk.

In general we were impressed with the network features of the TF6000PVRE, just as with the TF6000PVR in the previous test. The transfer speed of the Ethernet interface comes up to 1 Mb/s under normal conditions.

This even allows a unique feature of this Topfield: you can play and watch files in the receiver directly via the PC!

TECHNIC DATA	Manufacturer	Topfield, Seongnam, Korea
	Fax	+82-31-778-0801
	E-mail	inquiry@topfield.co.kr
	Model	TF6000PVRE
	Function	Digital DVB-S PVR receiver with Ethernet interface
	Channel memory	5000
	Symbol rate	2-45 Ms/sec.
	SCPC compatible	yes (> 2 Ms/s)
	USALS	yes
	DiSEqC	1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3
	Scart euroconnectors	2
	Audio/video outputs	3 x RCA + 3 x RCA YUV
	UHF modulator	no
	S-Video	yes
	Component output	yes
	0/12 V connection	no
	Digital audio output	yes
	LAN	yes
	EPG	yes
	C/Ku band compatible	yes
	Power supply	90-250 VAC, 50/60 Hz



Main menu |



SCPC reception |



EPG |



LAN settings |



Access the TF6000PVRE via the Internet using the receiver's webpage |



Editing timer entries with the receiver's webpage |

Expert conclusion

Thanks to its tried-and-tested concept the TF6000PVRE is a technically mature and very reliable PVR receiver for the whole family. With the appropriate cabling the Ethernet interface can be used to access the receiver from other rooms in the house or even from the Internet, if a new timer entry needs to be created during a holiday, for example. Another example is to play and watch files directly from receiver.

The workmanship and the overall impression are immaculate, as we have come to expect from Topfield.



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none