VPN TEST 2023

VPN Testing and Certification by AV-TEST

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PC Matic VPN

Executive Summary

The evaluation of PC Matic VPN in September 2023 presents an insightful analysis into its efficacy as a cybersecurity solution. The findings are drawn from comprehensive testing aimed at determining the VPN's ability to ensure secure, private, and unimpeded internet usage.

The scope of the assessment encompassed a range of essential aspects, such as the stability of connections, speed benchmarks, the robustness of encryption protocols, privacy features, the user interface's design quality, and the breadth of the server network. The array of tests performed was intended to mirror various real-world uses, providing a well-rounded overview of the VPN's performance capabilities.

Key Findings:

1. Connection Quality and Speed: Results indicate that PC Matic VPN maintains a high standard of connection stability and speed, facilitating seamless online activities such as streaming in high definition, engaging in online gaming, and managing significant data transfers without substantial speed degradation.
2. Advanced Encryption: The VPN employs industry-standard 256-bit AES encryption, safeguarding user data effectively. Such encryption is essential in safeguarding sensitive information against the increasingly complex cyber threats prevalent today.
3. Privacy Assurance: PC Matic VPN has proven effective in obscuring user IP addresses, offering a significant barrier against intrusive tracking and enhancing user anonymity on the internet, a critical component for users who prioritize discretion in their online activities.
4. Interface and Usability: The VPN's interface is crafted for straightforward navigation, enabling users to effortlessly manage settings and preferences. This ease of use is crucial for accommodating a diverse user base, including those without extensive technical experience.
5. Server Network Diversity: The VPN's extensive server network ensures that users can access a varied selection of content across different regions, an advantageous feature for overcoming regional content restrictions and for those requiring global content access during travel.

To sum up, PC Matic VPN has proven its competence in key operational domains, affirming its strong presence in the VPN industry. It stands out for its high-speed connectivity, advanced encryption standards, and solid privacy features, making it a sound choice for users aiming to bolster their online security and privacy.

Virtual Private Networks (VPNs)

Virtual Private Networks, known widely as VPNs, are crucial for enhancing online security and ensuring the privacy of internet users. They establish a protected, encrypted channel for data to traverse the internet, which is a necessity for keeping sensitive information out of the hands of intruders and for concealing users' identities. VPNs act as a shield for secure communication, essential for both personal and corporate use, to prevent unauthorized access to private networks and to keep data confidential.

The primary function of VPNs is to secure data through encryption, making it difficult for cybercriminals to capture and decrypt information in transit. They hide users' IP addresses, which adds a layer of anonymity and shields personal details such as location. VPNs are also valuable for bypassing regional restrictions on content, which can be advantageous for personal enjoyment and professional tasks. In business scenarios, they enable secure remote network access, allowing employees to work from anywhere without compromising security.

PC Matic VPN

PC Matic VPN aims to enhance online safety and privacy, moving past the traditional network security methods centered on defending network perimeters. Regardless of where users are or the security level of the networks they connect to, PC Matic VPN provides protection for data in transit.

The service is built around strong encryption practices, with 256-bit AES encryption at its heart, to ensure safe data transfer and prevent data breaches. Known for its straightforward interface, PC Matic VPN is accessible to a wide range of users, regardless of their technical background.

Designed to accommodate various needs, PC Matic VPN is suited for personal tasks such as secure internet browsing and accessing geo-restricted content, as well as professional requirements like remote access to business networks. It maintains a broad network of servers around the world, offering users many choices for secure and private internet access.

A prominent feature of PC Matic VPN is its no-logs policy, which assures users that their online activities are not monitored or recorded. This policy is crucial for users who value their privacy and wish to remain anonymous online.

Introduction

The objective of this report is to thoroughly evaluate PC Matic VPN's capabilities in protecting online privacy and security. The tests are designed to mimic the range of challenges VPN users commonly face, focusing on the level and efficacy of the security and privacy protections that the VPN offers in diverse digital environments.

Coverage Assessment

Throughout the testing scenarios, PC Matic VPN's effectiveness is quantitatively analyzed against challenges that include maintaining connection stability to enforcing advanced encryption and preserving user privacy. The analysis provides essential data on the VPN's adaptability in different digital contexts, emphasizing its capacity to protect user data and anonymity under various network conditions and across multiple geographies.

Quality of Protection Assessment

The investigation into the quality of protection that PC Matic VPN provides is comprehensive. Differentiating between types of protection is critical, as their impact on user privacy and security is significant. While a stable connection is foundational, the advanced features such as robust encryption protocols and a firm no-logs policy offer a heightened level of defense. The evaluation measures the VPN's ability to shield users from a spectrum of cyber threats, ensuring a secure and private online experience.

Test Results of PC Matic VPN

Review of Key Features

Usability

PC Matic VPN distinguishes itself in user convenience, featuring automatic reconnection after system restarts and retaining previously used connections for ease of use. While it does not offer a trial period, users benefit from a 30-day money-back guarantee. The service supports up to 5 or 10 devices under one subscription, catering to diverse user needs. Payment methods are adapted to regional preferences, including Bank Transfer, Credit Card, and PayPal. The subscription pricing varies by region, with an example being the $80 annual cost for a 5-device plan in the US, showcasing a competitive pricing model.

Security

In terms of security, PC Matic VPN stands out with its effective kill switch that instantly prevents data leakage if the connection drops. This feature operates swiftly on both Windows and Android platforms, maintaining zero disconnection time. The VPN consistently passed DNS Leak Tests, ensuring that internet service provider details remain concealed. Additionally, it offers protection against WebRTC leaks of local IP addresses. A significant advantage is the VPN's ability to support secure peer-to-peer and torrenting activities, keeping user locations confidential.

Privacy

PC Matic VPN is committed to user privacy, evidenced by its strict no-logging policy that ensures no tracking of user activities. It supports various secure protocols including WireGuard, IKEv2, and OpenVPN, backed by 256-bit AES encryption for robust data protection. While it does not offer ad blocking, the VPN's focus on data encryption highlights its dedication to safeguarding user privacy.

Transparency

The transparency of PC Matic VPN is apparent in its straightforward disclosure of data storage and logging practices. However, the sources do not provide detailed information regarding independent audits or specific transparency reports related to PC Matic.

Performance

PC Matic VPN boasts an extensive server network, covering 53 countries and 83 locations, ensuring broad global accessibility. Its support infrastructure includes direct contact options, addressing user questions and issues effectively. Notably, the VPN successfully provides access to geo-restricted content, including platforms like Netflix, in various locations without constraints.

Review of Key Performances

This review evaluates PC Matic VPN on key performance indicators critical for user experience, encompassing streaming quality, file transfer speeds, and connection latency in various geographic contexts.
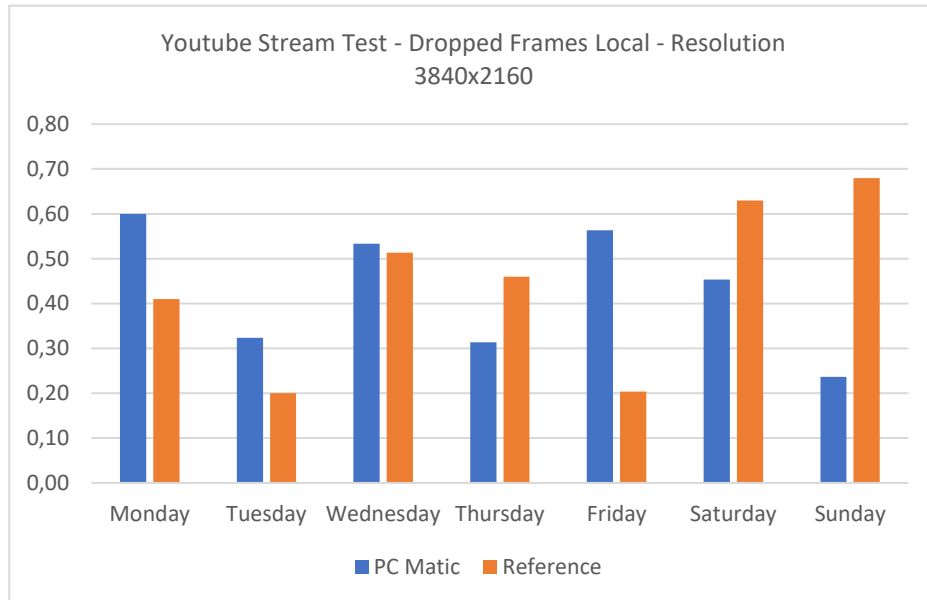

Figure 1: YouTube Stream Test - Dropped Frames Local - Resolution 3840x2160. Illustrates the performance of PC Matic in a YouTube live stream test, specifically focusing on the occurrence of dropped frames in a local geographical context at a resolution of 3840x2160 pixels.
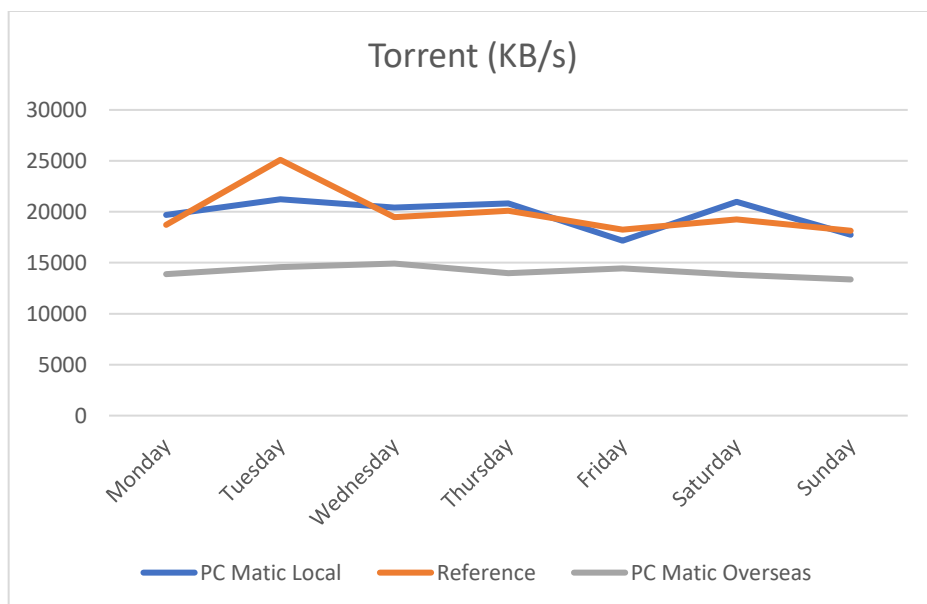

Figure 2: Torrent Performance - PC Matic vs. Reference. This graph provides a comprehensive analysis of Torrent performance by comparing PC Matic with the reference measures in both local and overseas geographical contexts.

Local Performances

Locally, PC Matic VPN exhibits strong streaming capabilities, with minimal impact on video playback quality. Torrent downloads are executed efficiently, though there is an increase in latency which might impact real-time online activities. Notably, upload and download speeds maintain consistency, but some reductions in speeds are observed, potentially affecting bandwidth-intensive tasks.
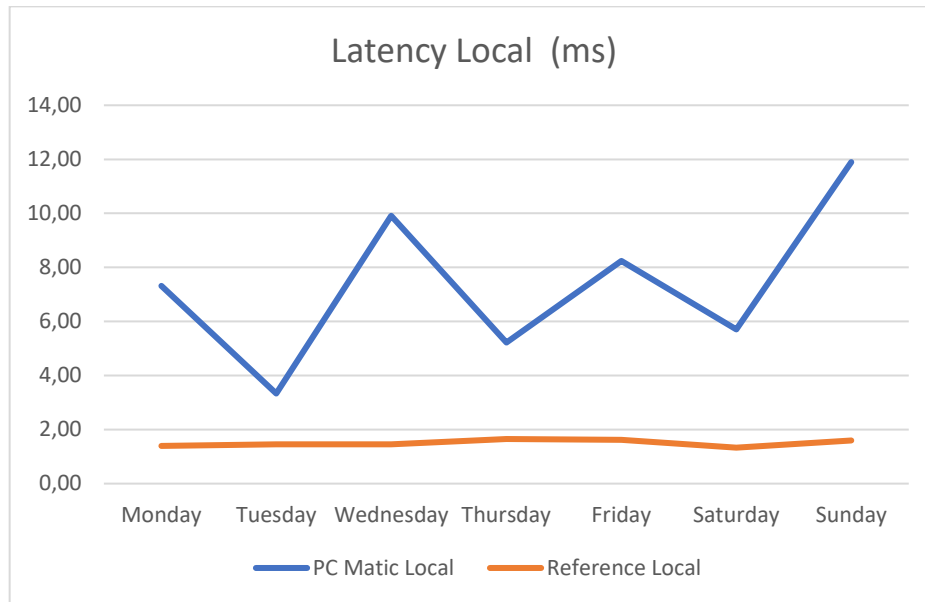

Figure 3: Local Latency - PC Matic vs. Reference. Presents an analysis of latency performance in a local geographical context, comparing PC Matic with the reference measures.
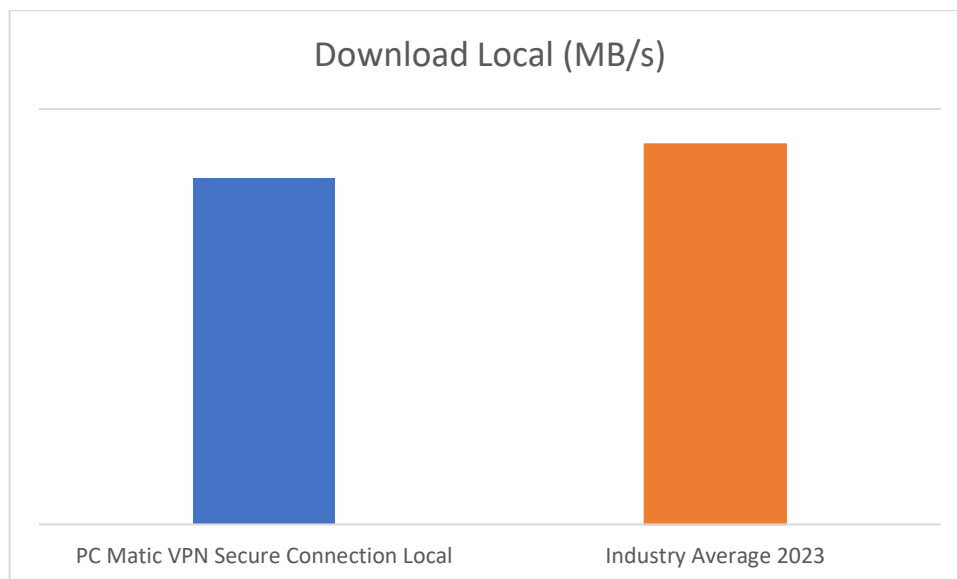

Figure 4: Local Download Speed - PC Matic vs. Reference. Showcases the download speeds achieved with PC Matic compared to the reference measures in a local geographical context.
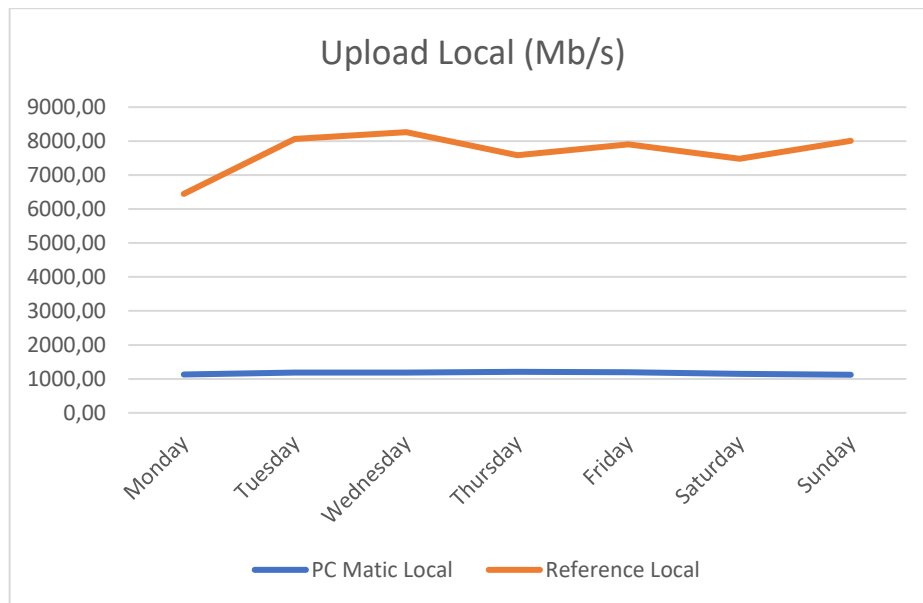
Figure 5: Local Upload Speed - PC Matic vs. Reference. Compares the upload speeds achieved using PC Matic with those of the reference measures in a local geographical context.

Overseas Performances

Globally, PC Matic VPN maintains good streaming quality with only minor increases in dropped frames. While torrent download speeds show a slight decline, they stay within acceptable limits. Latency is higher, which could impact real-time communications. Both download and upload speeds are lower than local performance, a factor for users involved in substantial data transfers.

In the US, PC Matic VPN's streaming performance exhibits a slight decrease in stability, indicated by a small increase in dropped frames, though playtime delay remains low. Latency is within reasonable bounds, but there are noticeable reductions in download and upload speeds, relevant for users with high data transfer requirements.
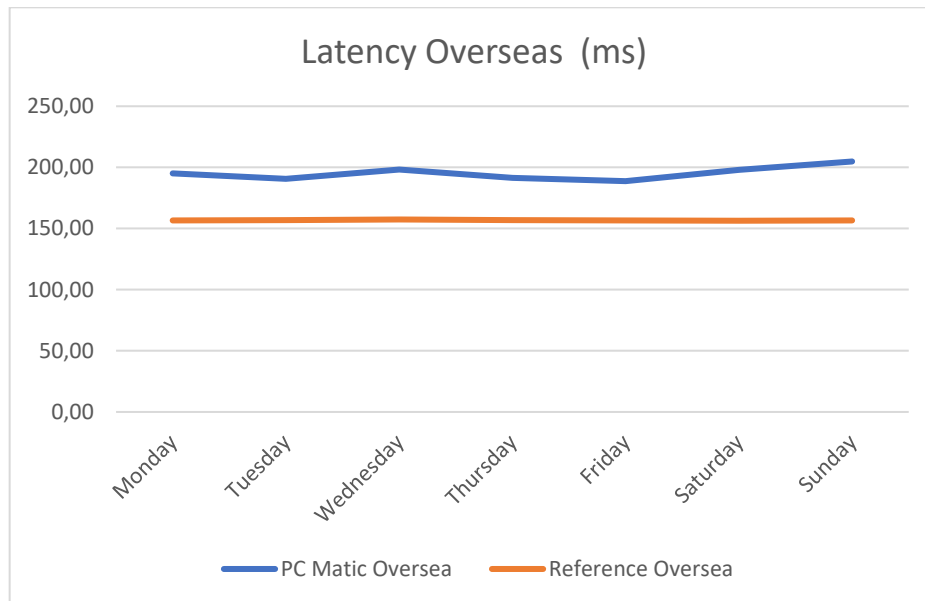

Figure 6: Overseas Latency - PC Matic vs. Reference. Analyzes latency performance in overseas geographical contexts, comparing PC Matic with the reference measures.
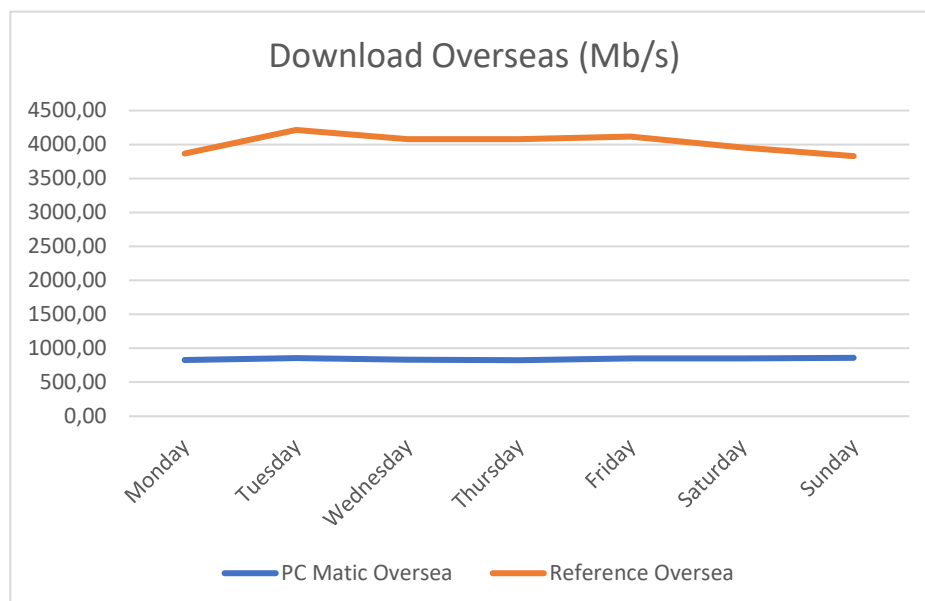
Figure 7: Overseas Download and Upload Speed - PC Matic vs. Reference. Showcases the download speeds achieved with PC Matic compared to the reference measures in overseas geographical contexts.
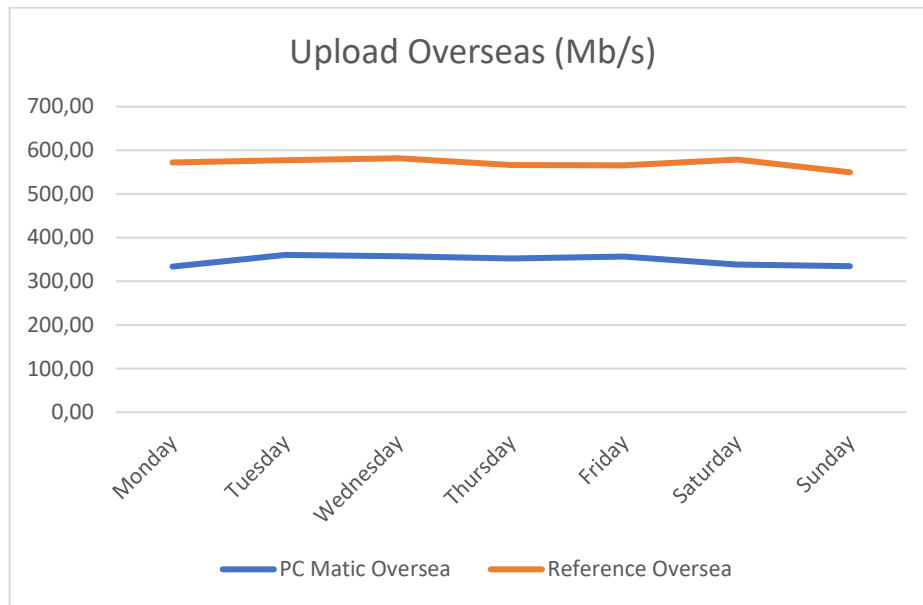

Figure 8: Overseas Upload Speed - PC Matic vs. Reference. Compares the upload speeds achieved using PC Matic with those of the reference measures in overseas geographical contexts.

Overall

In conclusion, PC Matic VPN provides sufficient performance for standard online activities such as streaming and browsing. While it encounters some limitations in high-speed transfers and increased latency on an international scale, these are relatively minor for typical internet usage. The VPN's capability to maintain stable connections for everyday online activities positions it as a reliable choice for regular internet users.

Test Results Summary

PC Matic VPN underwent extensive testing in a variety of performance scenarios, encompassing both local and international connections. The results highlight the VPN's user-oriented features, including automatic reconnection, diverse payment options, and multi-device support. Its security infrastructure is robust, featuring effective DNS and IP leak protection, alongside a reliable kill switch. The VPN's dedication to privacy is underscored by its no-logging policy and strong encryption protocols.

During local tests, PC Matic VPN excelled in streaming capabilities, displaying only a slight increase in dropped frames and a minor reduction in playtime delay, ensuring a smooth viewing experience. The service also showed favorable performance in torrent download speeds. Although there was an uptick in latency and a dip in download speeds, these changes are within acceptable ranges. This level of performance is adequate for most personal usage scenarios, considering the inherent encryption overhead.

In overseas settings, PC Matic VPN maintained commendable performance in streaming. The observed increase in latency and the decrease in download and upload speeds, while typical for VPN services, did not significantly impact the overall user experience. The VPN effectively handles typical online tasks, such as media streaming and file downloads, in international environments.

Overall, PC Matic VPN has proven its reliability for standard use cases like streaming and browsing. The tests reveal that, despite minor compromises in speed and latency due to encryption, these trade-offs are within acceptable limits for most private users. Thus, PC Matic VPN stands out in the VPN market, offering a balanced mix of comprehensive security and privacy features with performance levels that are more than sufficient for everyday online activities.