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Motorola RAZR V3i mobile phone

A manufacturer with the most popular mobile on the market has just one problem when it comes to launching the next version - getting it right. But has Motorola done that with the V3i?

by Shaun Marin published on 16 February 2006

A manufacturer with the most popular mobile on the market has a problem when it comes to updating that phone: just how do you improve on a product without ruining it? Motorola has obviously decided the way forward is to leave well alone, only pausing to correct a couple of oversights it made in the original. Enter the RAZR V3i, for all intents and purposes the same ubiquitous bling handset that lets hoodies up and down the country text their mates, but with the inclusion of a megapixel camera over the original's VGA snapper. We applaud this, and also the addition of a video capture option - the original just offered playback. However, apart from that, there's not much to add - at least not if you live in the UK. You see, over in the good ol' US of A the V3i is doing exactly what everyone said the V3 should have been doing: flying the Motorola/Apple flag as an iTunes phone instead of the much maligned and distinctly brick-like ROKR. However, we are set to miss out on that thrill, for reasons that to be honest aren't exactly clear to us, or maybe even Motorola. The response: "A global announcement was made in 2005 relating to the availability in some markets of a future version of the V3i that would be compatible with the iTunes music player. At present, we haven't announced anything further on this but will do so when/if this product is to become available in the UK". So, apart from the imaging improvements there's very little to report, and this handset will probably be slipping into jeans pockets without the new owners realising that it's actually different from the original RAZR. Or it would be if Moto had decided to update the V3 with the V3i, instead of selling this handset as an upgrade, and placing it above the older phone in its RAZR V3 "family of handsets". Obviously



...cont.

Motorola feels that people will pay a premium for the improved photo capture, the option of shooting videos and a slightly better screen on the outside. We're not so sure they will.

VERDICT

While the V3i is a decent update of the original V3, its improved imaging skills do not add up to a large enough difference to sit above it in the range. Now, if it had iTunesÖ

At a glance

What is it?

Update to the phone d'jour

Good

Still looks the business, and the megapixel camera and video option are significant improvements

Bad

Not different enough from the original, and why no iTunes?

Verdict

If you like the V3, what's not to like here? But the update leaves us feeling short changed

Price price dependent on contract

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10