

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/175/sony-nw-ms70d-network-walkman-mp3>

Sony NW-MS70D Network Walkman

by Stuart Miles published on 9 December 2003

Sony's foray into the MP3 market is a strange one. On the one side its player - The Network Walkman is small, sleek and well styled, on the other however the player isn't actually an MP3 player. Sony being Sony has once again decided to create its own format and for people looking for the simplicity of transferring MP3 tracks to and from the player wherever they are will be sorely disappointed. Using Sony's proprietary software - SonicStage Simple Burner - tracks can be burnt on the CD-R/RW in either Sony's ATRAC3plus (Adaptive Transform Acoustic Coding3plus) or ATRAC3 (Adaptive Transform Acoustic Coding3) formats. Taking either CD or MP3 files - you cannot burn any other formats - tracks can be compressed by up to 1/20th of their original size depending on the quality setting you chose. Music can be burned and compressed to 132, 105, 66, 64 or 48 kbps (kilobits per second). Track information is provided via an internet connection to Gracenote CDDB before burning and this information will then appear on the LCD display when you play the track. The player itself is virtually void of buttons except for the play button, and everything is controlled via a series of twisty knobs and sliders. At the computer the player can be connected via the docking station making for a tidy desktop although this then connects to the PC via a standard USB not USB2.0 or Firewire cable.



...cont.

VERDICT

Overall the Sony Network Player is an interesting kettle of fish. The unit itself does look good and the fact that you can get almost 12hours of music on to its 256Mb of internal memory is also a good feat. The addition of a Memory Stick Duo slot allows you to expand your music collection when you like while still having a core bunch of songs on the player. It is however the annoyance of having to save down your WMA and MP3 files into the Sony format before you can play them. While this works on the CD player or other such devices on which Sony has bolted the ATRAC coding systems, as a very portable player we feel it just doesn't embody the MP3 belief - ie that songs are for sharing and the creation of a single format has to be the way forward.

At a glance

What is it?

Pseudo MP3 player from Sony

Good

Minimalist design

Bad

Proprietary software and coding formats

Verdict

If Sony wishes to recover financially, they need to stop using cul-de-sac formats which were great for MiniDisc but not necessary other styles of music player.

Price £279

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10