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Asus R1F Tablet PC laptop

This now the time for a tablet PC

by Stephen Patrick published on 18 December 2006

Since its introduction, Tablet PC has had something of a tough ride, with opinion falling into either the love it or hate it camp with very little opinion in the middle. In response to this, most manufacturers have downplayed the tablet aspect, opting for a high-spec laptop that just happens to come with a digitised screen.

This is the category the Asus R1F falls into. The design of the R1F retains Asus' notebook style, with a corporate yet eye-catching appearance but it looks like a notebook. It's only when you spot the central hinge on the screen that you see it can be twisted around and used in tablet mode.

Weighing 2.4kg, the chassis is comfortable to carry but you won't want it resting on your arm all day. However, this is a possibility, as we found we could easily get 4 hours from the battery, which is a good morning's work, which will then allow you to recharge it over your lunch break and then run all afternoon without having to sit down.

Tablets have tried to lose their underpowered stigma and the R1F succeeds admirably. If you take a look at its specification - it offers an Intel Core 2 Duo T5600, 1024MB of DDR2 memory and a 100GB hard drive - it's pretty much a top-end notebook. If you decide to use it as such you won't be disappointed. The dual-core processor means you can run multiple tasks at the same time and we found it ran smoothly without the fan kicking into life too often. You could easily use this machine as you're sole PC and not worry about it being too slow.

The only flaw in the specification is the use of an integrated graphics chip, which if you're using this machine just for work won't be a problem as it'll run presentations and DVDs without too much trouble.

The digitised screen measures 13.3 inches and is



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a good size for writing notes and drawing sketches. Screen accuracy is excellent. When using the included stylus with Windows Journal software, it's simple to take notes and convert them to text. Rotating the screen 180-degrees for tablet-PC use, the screen can instantly switch from landscape to portrait layout at the touch of a button. Being Tablet PC you can either save these in their raw form or transcribe your writing to text. With Wi-Fi built-in, you can easily send your notes as email attachments to colleagues.

When you want to use it as a notebook, you'll find the keyboard hasn't been overlooked. It's a good size and comfortable to use, with the keys filling most of the main board.

VERDICT

The Asus R1F manages to mix the idea of a notebook with Tablet PC with far more success than you'd expect. We had expected the high-end specification to offer less than ideal battery life but it even scored highly in this department. With no real flaws to complain about this is a great machine that will keep you working wherever you need to be.

At a glance

What is it?

Core 2 Duo Tablet PC

Good

Powerful, great battery life

Bad

Quite heavy, minimal graphics

Verdict

An amazingly powerful notebook with Tablet PC functions, which gives you even more options

Price £1399

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10