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Sony Ericsson T650i mobile phone - First Look

Can the latest T series handset impress?

by Mark Harris published on 9 May 2007

Is the mobile phone market growing up at last? At last night's Sony Ericsson launch there wasn't a Walkman or Cyber-shot in sight as the phone maker rolled out four new handsets with an emphasis on design.

Pocket-lint managed to get a brief hands on with the new T650 from Sony Ericsson, so should you be opting for the latest T? We find out.

Following on from the company's T Series, the Sony Ericsson T650i is a comprehensive update of the venerable T600 chassis. The top half of the 3G phone is now finished in stainless steel, obsessively worked in an eight-stage process (apparently) to capture the light and give a classy "ray" effect.

Unfortunately, the lower half is less impressive. The number keys have shrunk to vestigial metallic nubs and the initial two colour options - Growing Green and Midnight Blue - have a yawn-inducing dullness that suggests they were the last two colours left in the box.

So back to the sexy top half, where the 1.9-inch screen boasts a scratchproof "mineral glass" coating. Unlike the "animal" or "vegetable" glasses to be found on rival handsets, we suppose.

It seemed tough enough, at least, and the Sony Ericsson PR bods didn't mind us giving it a rap to check it out. The screen also has a new bonding technique that gives a wider viewing angle.

Likewise the phone doesn't include the more interesting colourful themes found on the S500i which is a cheerful 2.5G sliding handset whose colourful themes spill off the screen and keypad



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to multi-colour strips running down each side.

These can be event-based (alerting you to texts and calls) or just deliver a cheesily hypnotic light show. Inside its 14mm shell, it's got a 2MP camera, Bluetooth 2.0, media player and Picture Blogging software.

Where it does win out however is the T650i's 12.5mm slimness. This thin design - which is almost as thin as the Walkman W880 (just 3mm in it) is marred only slightly by the protruding autofocus 3.2MP camera lens on the back. Sony suggest pairing the phone with its new HBH-DS980 Stereo Bluetooth headset, which looks plasticky but sounds excellent.

VERDICT

It's a mixed bag really with an almost Jekyll and Hyde approach - we like the top half but not the bottom. If you can get past the styling issues - something that affected the company's Z610 model, then the phone underneath is good enough, but won't get you too excited.

More of a catalogue filler, rather than a breaking the mold option.

Expect a full review later in the year. The T650i will be available from Q3 2007.

At a glance

What is it?

3G mobile phone

Good

That steel top, 3G, 1.9-inch screen

Bad

The bottom half, run of the mill stuff

Verdict

More of a catalogue filler, rather than a breaking the mold option

Price Price dependent on contract

Your score

?/10