

T-Mobile HTC Ameo smartphone

Can HTC win out the smartphone war with this device?

by Stuart Miles published on 21 May 2007

The HTC Ameo is the latest handset from HTC and is exclusive to T-Mobile. But with a 5-inch screen and removable keyboard this isn't your average smartphone. We check it out to see whether it cuts the mustard.

The new phone originally codenamed Athena and now called the HTC Ameo is a Windows Mobile-powered device which boasts a 5-inch touchscreen display and detachable QWERTY keyboard unlike anything currently available on the market.

That keyboard, when not in use, acts as guard to protect the screen and sticks there via strong magnets. It's not a full-proof plan and to be honest we've already found it dislodged at the bottom of our bag, but it will stop the screen getting the odd knock.

We stay bag, by the way, because this is unlikely to ever fit in your pocket, suit or otherwise, as that screen means it's bigger than a Moleskin notepad (see pictures).

The keyboard once removed sits on the desk and the screen then at a 30 degree angle from it (see pictures) making it look like a small mini-me laptop.

For working at a desk this is great, but with only one angle you have to make sure you are sitting in the right position.

In use and the keyboard is fairly easy to use, although a lack of response to the keys does mean that you do have to check to see whether you've pressed them or not.

Unfortunately it's not big enough to touch type on (not unless you have the hands of a 1-year-old) and you'll find yourself using your index fingers



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rather than your thumbs. We also found that unless you have a level surface to sit it on, it's quite difficult to use as the magnets that hold the screen in place are only so strong.

Get beyond input and other specs include a Intel PXA270 624 MHz processor with ATU Graphic Chip W2284, Wi-Fi and HSDPA connectivity, as well as a 3 megapixel camera and 8GB Microdrive to store everything on.

First impressions of the camera are disappointing, certainly compared to Sony Ericsson's Cyber-shot range or a regular stand-alone digital camera and there was a delay in taking the picture and the image that you actually captured, however we love the interface, which is displayed on that bright 5-inch screen.

That screen is also great for using the Web'n'walk functionality with websites well displayed on screen and connecting to them quickly made possible through the HSDPA or Wi-Fi options.

The Ameo still disappointingly runs Windows Mobile 5 rather than 6, but this shouldn't put you off all together, and although T-Mobile hasn't set a date, it has confirmed to Pocket-lint that customers will get a free upgrade to version 6 when it happens.

VERDICT

It's best to look at the Ameo as a mini laptop or PDA rather than a phone first as the size is going to restrict what you do. That said the Ameo has got lots going for it starting with that big screen - we dare say you could probably even do a presentation from it, it's that good.

It's not completely perfect, it would have been nice to see the keyboard being Bluetooth and a stand put on the back of the screen for better positioning especially if you haven't got a desk or level surface to hand. With the keyboard being so thin and the device so large HTC could have easily made the keyboard expandable. Finally the

At a glance

What is it?

Smartphone

Good

Big screen, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, detachable keyboard

Bad

Keyboard should have been Bluetooth, keyboard doubling-up as cover should have better fixing

Verdict

A very nice offering, as long as you aren't looking to put it in your pocket

Price Price dependent on contract

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/2350/t-mobile-htc-ameo-smart-phone>

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camera's performance isn't great.

These however are small quirks on what overall is a very nice offering, as long as you aren't looking to put it in your pocket.