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Medion RIM 1000 UMPC

Does this suffer from the usual UMPC flaws?

by Stephen Patrick published on 9 July 2007

The UMPC (Ultra Mobile PC) market is still in its formative stages, so manufacturers are still experimenting with size and format.

The initial designs opted for no keyboard and Microsoft's TouchPack software that allows you to type directly on to the screen. The problem is it's a little too fiddly. So Medion has opted to build a keyboard into the RIM 1000 - it's first attempt at the format.

Weighing in at 745g, it's not too heavy and being made of plastic it feels solid in the hand. It's not as robust as we first thought though, and you wouldn't want to drop it too often. The QWERTY keyboard is hidden away behind the screen and you slide it out, rather like the latest mobile phones. You hold the device and type with your thumbs. The keyboard has been split in two, rather like Microsoft ergonomic keyboards, to make typing easier but if you're not the best typist in the world this comes across as confusing and a little hard to get accustomed to.

The screen is a 6.5-inch touchscreen panel, which needs a firm press, either with your finger or the supplied pen to register. We initially had a few problems with this screen and had to format it a few times before the pointer actually clicked where we wanted it too, which isn't a great start.

As its touchscreen, there is a haze to it so you won't want to watch DVDs or use it as a multimedia device. However, for viewing websites and reading documents, it's more than adequate. If you find the screen is a little small, you can always use the integrated zoom function that will make pages bigger. Obviously, you'll need to scroll the page but it works reasonably well.

This is the first UMPC we've seen running Windows Vista and were actually a little surprised



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to find that it would run. After all, it's powered by a VIA 1GHz processor that isn't exactly designed for performance but rather for budget price and power conservation. With 768MB of memory, Windows takes a while to load and if you try and run more than one application at a time, you'll find it slows down considerably.

UMPC devices tend to be only as useful as their connections and the RIM 1000 doesn't lack for them. You'll find 802.11g Wi-Fi as standard, as is Bluetooth. The inclusion of a webcam is a nice touch, but with only two USB2 ports, the placing of one of the bottom of the unit seems a little strange. If you restrain from using this port, you'll be able to take advantage of a stand on the rear of the device that angles it slightly towards you.

VERDICT

The Medion RIM 1000 isn't the worst UMPC we've seen but it suffers from the same flaws inherent in all the devices, namely lack of power and long-term battery life. The design works reasonably well but we're still left thinking, especially for the price, why not opt for a fully feature notebook?

At a glance

What is it?

UMPC (Ultra Mobile PC)

Good

Built-in keyboard, Windows Vista

Bad

Won't replace your notebook, lacks power

Verdict

It's a reasonable attempt at doing something with the UMPC concept but it still lacks power and long-term battery life

Price £800

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10