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Dualphone 3088 Cordless Skype handset

Is this the phone to convince you to use VoIP?

by Stuart Miles published on 30 July 2007

We've said it before and we will say it again, Skype is great, but the need to sit in front of your computer to make a call can be frustrating and too geeky for some.

Hearing the pleas, Dualphone has released the Dualphone 3088 Cordless Skype handset that offers a DECT landline phone and a Skype handset in one freeing you from your computer.

Great I hear you cry, but won't my PC still need to be on? Well actually the answer is no. Moving away from the need to have a PC completely, the Dualphone 3088 plugs straight into your broadband router and steals a connection from there bypassing the need to have a PC on or even be touched.

Skype contacts are all stored on the phone and you can even set up an account from scratch, although it's a bit fiddly typing in all your details on a 10 key keypad.

Once set up, the system works almost effortlessly with sound quality on both the landline DECT side of things (which has a range of 300m) and the Skype side of things (which only has a range of 50m). In fact some of the people called (you can use SkypeOut) didn't know which we were using until we told them.

In practice and the whole thing is incredibly easy although there are some drawbacks to having the ability to make free and cheap calls from your sofa.

The main one is the design. Basically, it's a bit cheap looking and compared to the Philips VoIP offering that does the same trick, i.e., allows you to abandon your PC, you can evidently see who



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has a bigger budget in the design department.

That's not to say that it will cut your fingers every time you pick it up, but clearly style wasn't at the front of the list of must haves at Dualphone.

Then there is the lack of an answer machine - a deal breaker for most, and for us. If it wasn't for losing the ability to screen calls so you can choose not to answer the call to your mother or mother-in-law, this would be sitting pride and place in our living room (well after the Philips offering). It's a strange omission and an annoying one.

Other issues we had was a lack of the ability to save land line contacts in phone, something that you can do for your Skype contacts. You can't even call landline numbers in the Skype contacts list.

VERDICT

If you want to use Skype, but don't want to be stuck in front of the computer this is a really good effective way of doing it.

Simple to use, it does have its drawbacks and against the Philips, we would go Philips, nonetheless this is worth a closer look.

At a glance

What is it?

Skype handset

Good

No PC required, easy to set up, holds Skype contact book

Bad

Handset looks cheap, no answer machine, need to have the phone near your network router

Verdict

A great handset let down by the lack of answering machine and a cheapish look

Price £79.99

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10