

HP Pavilion HDX9095EA laptop

Can HP do entertainment with its latest laptop?

by Stephen Patrick published on 29 October 2007

When it comes to releasing a large screen notebook, HP has been a little slow off the mark. After all, both Acer and Dell have been selling theirs for close to a year now. However, the HP Pavilion HDX9095EA is well worth waiting for and certainly lives up to its name as an "Entertainment Notebook". HP feels so confident about this machine they've even dubbed it "The Dragon".

From the moment you receive this machine you know you've got a luxury product, as even the box it comes in has been designed. No simple brown box, no, unpacking the Dragon is supposed to be impressive. And so it is, the 20.1-inch screen sits on a pivot akin to those found on an external TFT monitor. This means instead of just opening the screen as you would a normal notebook, you can pitch it to exactly the angle you require. This is an important feature as there is a lot of screen to get to grips with.

The quality of the panel is amazing and is easily as bright as that of your television. This is necessary as you'll find a digital TV tuner built-in and as there are also ports for hooking the notebook up to 5.1 surround sound speakers, you can easily set this up as a second TV anywhere in the house. This is a media machine and not a gaming machine as the ATI Mobility Radeon HD 2600 XT is a good all-round card that handles Windows Vista DirectX 10 features with ease but isn't necessarily a high-end card.

With an overall weight of 7.3kg, this isn't a machine for carrying around, this is a machine for using about the home as a home entertainment unit. As such, you'll find plenty of features onboard, such as Altec Lansing speakers and subwoofer and a row of touch-sensitive media buttons allow you to access the standard applications but it's the slide control volume, bass



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and treble controls that really set it apart. There is a remote control unit sitting alongside the keyboard, which seems only to be placed there to fill up space as it copies many of the features found on the access buttons. Obviously, the intention is to use this remote when you're sat up to 10 metres away from the machine.

When it comes to an impressive machine, you need an equally impressive specification and we found the spec list on the Dragon stunning. Powered by an Intel 2.2GHz Core 2 Duo T7500 processor and backed by 2048MB of memory things move quickly with little or no lag. For storage you'll find twin 200GB hard drives fitted. It's not all-good news as we found the keyboard to be on the small side, squeezed as it is between a numeric pad and a remote control.

VERDICT

The HP Pavilion HDX9095EA is a great machine. It's power and fun to use and certainly warrants the asking price.

However, we got the feeling this is very much a learning curve for HP, as the design seems to try to incorporate everything - there is even a biometric fingerprint reader for some reason - but not necessarily in the right place.

Leaving you with the feeling that HP is waiting for feedback and then tweaking the design. We may be wrong but this feeling stops us awarding The Dragon a Hot Product rating.

At a glance

What is it?

Media Centre Notebook

Good

Great design, large screen

Bad

Awkward keyboard, too many features

Verdict

HP's first 20-inch notebook is a wonder to behold but comes with a few design kinks

Price £1699

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10