

Makayama TouchBrowser

Want the iPhone browser on your Windows Mobile phone?

by Stuart Miles published on 18 April 2008

One of the best features of the iPhone is its browser and more importantly the way you can scan around an internet page with your finger. So can Makayama's newly announced TouchBrowser bring that experience to your Windows Mobile device? We take a look and see.

Available for phones running Pocket PC, Windows Mobile 5 and Windows Mobile 6, the TouchBrowser actually sits on top of the device's Internet Explorer and allows you to use your finger to scroll around screen so you can ditch the stylus.

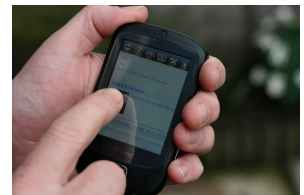
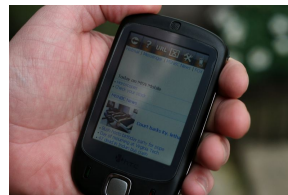
With the focus on using your finger rather than a stylus the interface is basic and buttons are large. Across the top of the screen you get a back button, quick access to Google search, the option of entering a URL, mobile or desktop view, settings and of course a chance to close the program.

Pressing the URL button offers you an on-screen keyboard with large buttons, although it is beset with problems. No landscape mode, no QWERTY keyboard layout and strangely no symbol access. If you want to visit Pocket-lint.co.uk for example you're stuffed (luckily you can type pocketlint.co.uk but that's not the point).

Even stranger is that you can, for some reason, opt for a vowel-focused keyboard where the vowels are at the top of the screen rather than alphabetically - why we aren't sure.

So you land at your web page and want to start scrolling, well it doesn't seem to be that easy. We tested the TouchBrowser on the HTC Touch, the chosen device shown on Makayama's website.

Unfortunately our experience wasn't as fluid. The



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software was buggy, the page load times were slow and the scrolling hanged so much that we weren't sure it even worked at times. When we did manage to get it to scroll properly it is no way near as responsive as the iPhone or the promotional video on the company's website.

An additional problem we found with the software using in on the HTC Touch was that it was very easy to activate the TouchFlo interface rather than scroll back up the page.

Back to the options available, and the Mobile view is probably the one redeeming feature of the interface although many internet browsers already do this. Here the software automatically forces the page to be viewed on your smartphone's screen and saves you from scrolling left to right, however this in itself means that all your finger is good for is to run up and down.

VERDICT

The premise sounds great: the iPhone browser interface in your Windows Mobile phone, but in practice it's a bit of a dog's dinner.

There is no pinch zooming, the finger scrolling doesn't work that well and you can't even put in symbols in the web address.

At a glance

What is it?

Finger touch browser interface

Good

Scroll using your finger

Bad

Slow, limited, no symbol support for URLs

Verdict

The premise sounds great; the iPhone browser interface in your Windows Mobile phone, but in practice it's a bit of a dog's dinner

Price £8

Our score

2/10

Your score

?/10