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Medion Akoya S5610 notebook

Supermarket supercomputer?

by Stephen Patrick published on 10 September 2008

Where did you buy your last PC? Was it an IT equipment specialist or somewhere like PC World? It's likely that the next one you buy will come from a supermarket when you're doing the weekly shop.

Increasingly supermarkets are the place to find the best bargain notebooks around and the latest is the Medion Akoya S5610 which can be found in Sainsbury's.

At £599 this isn't as cheap as some, but with full Centrino 2 branding and packing in some of the latest portable technology around, it offers amazing value for money.

The look is fairly standard. The Akoya is made from black plastic that feels solid and robust to the touch. There is little in the way of decoration but it did feel tactile and comfortable to the touch.

So what do you actually get for your money? For starters there is the Intel Core 2 Duo P7350, which runs at 2GHz. It uses Intel's latest 45nm technology so it not only runs faster but also uses less power, so the notebook stays cooler for longer. It is backed by 3072MB of memory, which really helps programs load quickly and smoothly. The hard drive offers 320GB of storage space, which is more than enough for most people.

In use we found this notebook to be fast and reliable. The specification lives up to expectations and is ideal for most tasks the average family will want a notebook for.

The screen is a standard 15.4-inch widescreen Super-TFT panel. For the price, you won't find it the brightest on the market but we found it sharp and bright enough for office tasks as well as for watching movies. There is a DVD rewriter fitted as standard for loading DVD movies.



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It has a dedicated graphics card in the form of the ATI Mobility Radeon HD 3470. This card has 256MB of its own memory and is ideal for playing most mainstream games. The card supports high-def content, but sadly the screen isn't high-def, having a resolution of 1200 x 800 pixels - however, image quality is generally good.

Weighing 2.8kg, it's a reasonably lightweight machine and with a battery that lasted, on average, for up to 3 hours, you'll be able to use it around the house with no problems.

Wireless LAN is also handled by Intel's latest chip, the WiFi Link 4965AGN, which uses 802.11n for faster connectivity, but we found it hooked up and ran smoothly on our older 802.11g setup. The Gigabit controller handles fixed networking, which once again is the fastest current technology.

Extra features are just as appealing, with an HDMI port for connecting to a digital TV and even an eSATA port for hooking up fast peripherals to your notebook. You'll even find a fingerprint scanner on the main body for adding an extra layer of security.

VERDICT

The Medion Akoya S5610 is a great notebook for the price and surprised us with its build quality and specification. It may not be a lot to look at but as a bargain notebook, this is far better than many we've seen recently.

At a glance

What is it?

Notebook

Good

Great spec, tough and robust

Bad

Poor battery life

Verdict

A powerful and highly usable notebook at a great asking price

Price £599

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10