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Roberts iDream DAB iPod clock radio

Can this wake you up in style?

by Stuart Miles published on 21 April 2009

You've got your iPod and you need to wake up in the morning. Wouldn't it be good if you could plug your iPod into your alarm clock and then wake up to your favourite tunes? Oh wait, that's what the Roberts iDream promises. But does it live up to the billing? We go to bed to find out.

The iDream is your typical clock radio. The front of the radio is as you might expect dominated by a massive screen that shows you the time, radio station you've tuned into or mode you are in. The curved sides of the player feature the speakers and the top is covered in buttons, lots of buttons. The back is left to connections like power, an aux in and a headphones socket so you can listen to the radio without disturbing anyone else sharing your bed.

The design, surprisingly for Roberts, is fairly basic but not in a good way. For something that you'll need to control half dazed at 6am in the morning there are surprisingly a lot of buttons. There are 15 in total, giving you access to everything from tuning the radio to changing the volume. It's not that you don't need most them, but do you really need a skip button for the iPod when you've got the iPod sitting in front of you?

What doesn't help matters is that they are spongy - which against the hard casing of the iDream for us doesn't really work as it makes them uncomfortable to use.

Aesthetics aside you get a DAB/FM RDS digital stereo clock radio with a built-in iPod dock. The iDream lets users listen to their iPod through its speakers and charges the 'Pod at the same time which is handy.

On the radio side of things, there are 20 station presets as well as auto time set, and the radio displays time and station info on a blue backlight screen that's dimmable making it easier to get to



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sleep if you prefer the dark.

Users can opt to have the clock stay on screen whilst tuned to a favourite station which is a nice feature if you just want to know the time rather than knowing what station you are on and overall the system works just as you would expect it. And yes you can set the alarm to either be an annoying buzzer, your iPod or the radio.

As for sound? Well this is an alarm clock foremost and sound system second. So don't expect anything too spectacular, which is a shame as we were hoping for better from Roberts. Suffice to say you aren't going to be using this to impress anyone.

VERDICT

We were disappointed with the iDream as we expect more from Roberts. Yes the radio elements are good, yes you can charge your iPod, and yes you do get a remote control for the uber lazy, but for some reason that comes at the price of poor speakers and a cheap looking design.

The silver, black and white colour scheme isn't to our liking and unless your bedroom looks like some eighties shine it's unlikely to appeal to you either.

Roberts you can do better.

At a glance

What is it?

DAB iPod clock radio

Good

DAB, iPod dock, FM radio

Bad

Design, ease of use, colour scheme

Verdict

We expect more from Roberts and this clearly isn't them on form

Price £79.99

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10