



## iKIT Reviewed by George Malim

iKIT – A pocket  
multimedia messenger

**iMovio's iKIT multimedia messaging device shouldn't be compared to a smartphone or a basic PC. Instead, it aims to fill the gap between a basic phone and those two devices.**

Aimed primarily at the instant messaging generation, the device, which measures approximately 9.5cm x 6.5cm x 1.5cm, has a neat clamshell form factor and does in many ways resemble a miniaturised laptop. This impression is further reinforced when you

open the screen and see a full QWERTY keyboard, a button based mouse and five short cut keys marked email, chat, browse, contacts and music. The device runs a Linux operating system, weighs just 113g and is available in a variety of colours.

Within seconds of firing the iKIT up for the first time it identified my home Wi-Fi network and I was surfing the web. The device offers a Wi-Fi shortcut key and I always found it simple to connect to other Wi-Fi

networks while out and about during my test period. The iKIT isn't just a Wi-Fi messenger, though. Its true versatility is unlocked with its Bluetooth connectivity functionality, which enables it, once connected to a Bluetooth-enabled device that has a data connection, to provide its connected applications.

As a browser the iKIT works acceptably with the mouse navigating web pages effectively using an Opera Mini browser and an in-built magnification function that enables you to zoom in on portions of a page at a time. Browsing however, isn't the machine's strongest suit. The 2.8" screen, although comparable to a smartphone's, simply isn't the ideal window to the web. Nevertheless screen quality is sufficiently high to run web applications such as Google Maps effectively and make use of a wide variety of multimedia content.

**"The iKIT makes a great companion to a more basic Bluetooth-enabled phone..."**

Browsing on the move is a handy extra when you need to check something quickly but, for me, the iKIT's real strength lies in its instant messaging and email capabilities. It is when you use these applications that the device really comes into its own.

Again, it's important to view the device in context. With a price point of around £100 this functionality on a mobile device has – until now – been the preserve of smartphones costing in excess of £500, many of which don't offer the QWERTY keyboards or such intuitive navigation. It doesn't currently offer predictive text but I found the familiarity of the QWERTY keyboard, which can also be reconfigured for other languages, meant I wasn't slower to type than I would be using a smartphone. The keys themselves are well spaced and accurate to the touch and I found I made very few typing errors during the test.



Alongside the screen is a 0.3 megapixel webcam which facilitates the video dimension of chat interactions. This is only a webcam and it's a shame that there isn't a full camera, but taking pictures isn't what the iKIT is about.

The iKIT also offers a range of multimedia functionality, which includes a voice recorder, video and music players, a photo album and a file manager. With an internal allowance of 23MB for user media, the

iKIT isn't going to threaten MP3 players or digital cameras, however this can be extended up to 8GB with external Micro SD capability. Using a small device such as this for content storage really isn't the point, though messaging is its real strength.

**“...the iKIT's real strength lies in its instant messaging and email capabilities”**

The iKIT also includes utilities we have come to expect from phones such as an address book with PC synchronisation capability, clock, notepad, stopwatch, alarm, calculator and calendar, all of which are simple to discover and operate through the iKIT's on-screen interface.

The iKIT makes a great companion to a more basic Bluetooth-enabled phone and, viewed in this context and within the expectations that its price-point breeds, I can see it playing well as an alternative to the expense and contract conditions of a smartphone.

Basically the iKIT does many of the functions of a smartphone while acing messaging and email applications. That's no mean feat.

– George Malim

## iKIT Multimedia Messenger Specifications

**Processor:** Marvell PXA270 312MHz  
**Operating System:** Linux 2.4.19  
**User Interface GUI:** Proprietary plus Trolltech QT/E 2.3.8

### Dimensions

– 95mm (L) x 65mm (W) x 15.5mm (H)  
 – 113 g (with battery)

### Display

– 2.8 inch QVGA, TFT, 260,000 colours, landscape

### Keypad

– QWERTY / AZERTY + numeric keys  
 – 2 soft keys, 5 quick access keys, multi-directional

### Speaker

– 16 mm built-in, monophonic

### Memory Internal

– ROM: 128 MB, RAM: 64 MB SDRAM  
 – User data: 12MB, User media files: 23MB

### Memory External

– Micro SD (up to 8GB)

### Webcam

– 0.3 MP fixed focus camera  
 – Digital zoom: Up to 3X smooth digital zoom

### Connectivity

– Bluetooth® 2.0 with EDR, supports wireless  
 – (A2DP) & DUN profile  
 – WiFi® IEEE 802.11 b/g

### Internet and Instant Messaging

– Web browser Opera Mini 4.1  
 – JTWI / JSR75 compliant  
 – Supports MSN

### Battery

– 1050 mAh, Li-ion  
 – Standby Time; up to 250h  
 – Power-up Time; up to 3h (25% data download per hour)

## About George Malim

George Malim is a freelance journalist who has specialised in covering the telecoms and internet industries since 1998.

Previously the editor of Stream, Europe's first magazine to cover mobile content, he contributes regularly to telecoms magazines Mobile Europe, Capacity, Global Telecoms Business, VanillaPlus and Communications News. He has also worked as a reporter on CommunicationsWeek International and as features editor of Telecommunications International.