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Asus P735 Review

The best Pocket PC on the market in terms of performance

After conquering the IT market with its optical drives, motherboards and graphical cards, Asus brand becomes more and more reckoned for its Pocket PCs. Since the P525 model was launched on the market, Asus improved its devices to the point that it has no rival in terms of performance. Actually, the latest models available from Asus (P535, P735) are "killing" any other device manufactured by HTC, Eten or Gigabyte. There's no doubt about it: HTC is still the king of Pocket PCs in terms of features, but if you're looking for speed and reliability, then Asus is the brand that you want. Asus P735 seems to be in fact an upgraded version of P535, which simply received 3G technology, but curiously has been stripped of the GPS receiver that you can find in the latter model. Announced at the beginning of 2007, the device has been made available on the market in February and can be bought for a nifty price of around USD 650\$.

Design Asus P735 doesn't shine through its design and won't stand out from the crowd, no matter how much you'll expose it to the world. Still, the candybar look of the device will attract those that are not close-mouthed to new brands that were just launched on the market. The Pocket PC amazes through its simplicity and excellent finishes. The material used in manufacturing it is highly polished and it seems not to get scratched so easily, protecting the device even if not kept in a leather case. You might think that the device should be slimmer than it is (19 mm), just because it lacks QWERTY keyboard, but in fact, its thickness makes it more balanced, thus it fits better in your hand or pocket. As a matter of fact, Asus P735 looks better in reality than in pictures, and it's even better the moment you take it in your hand. Its measures (109 x 59 x 19 mm) and weight (143 grams including battery) will certainly satisfy any handheld fan. The device features the usual external controls and keys that every user expects. The left side of the device includes the camera button, the dual volume key and at the bottom, you'll notice a small Reset gap. You can find the Voice command key and the Hold keys on the right side of the Pocket PC. The Power button and the miniSD card slot have been placed on top of the device, while the miniUSB and 2.5mm jack ports were left for the bottom. There's also a small microphone on the bottom of the phone, right near the miniUSB port. Above the 2.8" screen you'll be happy to see a secondary camera used for video-calls. Asus hasn't changed the look of its devices too much and you have the same layout of the key in both models, P535 and P735. The 2 Megapixel camera on the back of the Pocket PC has been placed between the external speaker and the flash.

Display and Camera Asus P735 features a 2.8" TFT touchscreen that supports 65k colors and 240 x 320 pixels resolution. While this is not a big display, it still helps owners use the virtual keyboard on the screen with ease. Most people are thinking that the lack of a QWERTY keyboard is an important issue for a Pocket PC, in fact there are few users that actually type text messages with the help of a keyboard, most of them preferring the virtual keypad on the touchscreen. P735's display is identical in sizes and performances with those included in the P535 model, so it has the same stats. It is visible enough in the sunlight and it's low energy consuming even if set to maximum brightness. The 2 Megapixel camera features auto-focus, flash, self-portrait mirror and digital zoom. While not the best in its class, the P735's camera can be certainly included between the above average cameras, in terms of picture quality. With a little bit of set up, working on contrast and colors you'll be able to get excellent pictures, with not so much effort. The interface of the camera is intuitive and includes all the functions that a user might need such as: White Balance and Effects. The maximum resolution that you can use for snapshots is 1600 x 1200 pixels, while the lowest is 160 x 120 pixels. I noticed an improvement in the pictures' quality compared to the "older" P535. Colors are more vivid

and there's even less noise, especially if you take snapshots in bright light. The pictures below are proving that the P735's camera is more than just a "PDA camera", and can easily be categorized as an above average phone camera.

Menu and SoftwareAt the moment of its launch, the P735 has been shipped with Microsoft's Windows Mobile 5.0 operating system, but soon after, it has been replaced by the latest Windows Mobile 6.0. Those that were the first to buy the product were given the opportunity to upgrade to the latest operating system through Asus' official website, free of charge. Besides the usual functions offered by the Microsoft's operating system, Asus comes with its own exclusive software that provides the user with a variety of helpful options. The My Secret function encrypts and protects sensitive documents to keep them away from unauthorized eyes when activated. The ASUS Status feature keeps the user up to date with the status of the device, while the Profile function avoids embarrassing rings during meetings. With ASUS's Remote Presenter, users can control Powerpoint presentations stored on a notebook via a Bluetooth connection. They can even read the footnotes on the P735's screen as they are presenting. Another added function to help save contacts easily is the P735's business card recognition feature. The in-built 2M pixel auto-focus camera can pick out business card details and store them directly into the contacts section, omitting the need to carry all the business cards around. International teleconferencing meeting across up to three different time zones is now possible with the unique Meeting Planner. This innovative feature helps eliminate the hassle of time converting and makes meeting scheduling more efficient than ever before. The P735 is also packed with many business applications to help make scheduling and working on the go simpler and more efficient. Utilizing the Windows Mobile Operating System platform, users can view and edit documents in Excel and Word.

CommunicationWhen Asus P535 was launched, people were screaming because the device lacked EDGE and 3G connectivity and it was only left with the GPRS Class 10 technology. This time, Asus embedded the 3G technology, but stripped the GPS receiver from the P735 model, but which was present in P535 model. Of course you can attach a GPS receiver through the Bluetooth technology, but this is awkward to say the least. Furthermore, you get the same USB 1.1 version (slow), but you have Bluetooth 2.0 and Wi-Fi 802.11b/g connectivity. Below are the results for 3G data transfer speeds (295 Kbit/s download/ 258 Kbit/s upload), as well as for the EDGE connectivity (62 Kbit/s upload / 28 Kbit/s upload).The triband Asus P735 is compatible with GSM 900 / GSM 1800 / GSM 1900 networks and has a very good signal reception. The in-call sound experience is superior than the one met in HTC devices, in terms of loudness and clarity.

Processor and MemoryAsus P735 features a powerful Intel Xscale processor running at speeds of up to 520 Mhz. This is the same CPU embedded in the previous P535 model, and thus, the performances are almost identical. As you can see from the screenshots, P735 has a little bit of advantage overall, but this is not noticeable when you're using the device. Overall, this is by far the fastest Pocket PC available on the market and the best in terms of performance. To complete the picture, Asus P735 includes 64 MB SDRAM and 256 MB NAND Flash, which sustains furthermore the power of the device. Those that want more storage space will be happy to find that Asus P735 supports miniSD cards for memory expansion.

MultimediaThere is little to tell about the multimedia part of Asus P735. Not quite built for music listeners, the device can reproduce with mediocrity various media files through the included Windows Media Player 10. Still, it's a good thing that the device features a 2.5mm jack port, which enables you to use your own headphones for a better multimedia experience. There's also a Streaming player which is missing in most HTC devices. Overall, for a business tool, the multimedia part has been built plain and simple, and thus will not require too much of your time to access it. Movies are running smoothly and you won't experience any missing frames, not even when using the CPU in Normal mode (it's a 520 Mhz processor and it shows).

BatteryThe candybar form of the device and its rather medium sizes only permitted the manufacturer to include a medium capacity battery. Asus P735 features a 1300 mAh Li-Ion battery, just like its predecessor P535, which should last about 300 hours in standby mode and 5 hours in talk

time mode. In truth, the battery will deplete much faster if you continue to use the device with the CPU set to Turbo Mode. It's true that the device will be much faster, but don't expect more than 3 hours of standard continuous usage. In case you're not looking for a high performance, you can set the CPU to Normal mode to simply maintain more of the battery's power. That will give you almost 5 hours of continuous standard usage with backlighting set to maximum. Overall, this is a good battery, which nears the performances of those included in HTC devices.

Impressions One of the best Pocket PCs on the market, if not the best in terms of performance; however, it lacks a proper design to attain the much desired success. Asus P735 is far from ugly, but it's a pity that such a good device looks so unremarkable. If you're looking to buy one, then [here](#) is the place.

The Good The P735 scores high in every test that you can think of, no doubt about that. Asus made a good job regarding all the components included and made huge improvements in software integration. The result is a high performance Pocket PC which seems to be the best business solution on the market. The question is "How long will it take HTC, the main PDA manufacturer - to overcome the performance of Asus' P735 device and offer a better and cheaper solution?"

The Bad I'm pretty sure that most businessmen who are looking for a viable communication solution are more interested in performance and less in design. Still, HTC proved that it's not always like that and that a good design could always sell a low-performance product, while the other way around it's less possible. I believe that with a better design, Asus could definitely increase their Pocket PC sales, especially because they own the best devices available on the market for the moment.

Sales package Asus P735 Pocket PC 1300 mAh Li-Ion battery StylusExtra stylus Charger Car charger Stereo wired headset miniUSB cable Magnetic belt-clip case User guide CD with software