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[HTC P4350 \(Herald\) Review](#)

Better designed version of the older Qtek 9100

Since it was founded in 1997, the Taiwanese company HTC accustomed its fans to a huge PDA offer, that increased every month with at least 2-3 new models. I hope you're not bored (yet) by HTC's lineup, because they're really making interesting devices for different targets. In this case, HTC P4350 aka Herald was born by the market demand for a cheaper version of the incredible (at that time) HTC TyTN aka Hermes. Be prepared to learn both names of HTC's devices as they are widely known by both their codename or series name. Herald is a slimmer replica of the Hermes in design and features. There are some exceptions which make Herald much cheaper than Hermes, such as: smaller battery (1130 mAh), lack of Infrared and 3G technology and a lower processor. Announced in early November 2006, the device was available on the market the next month for a price that ranges between USD 600-700 depending on the location. **Design** There are many similarities between the 2 devices, HTC Herald being the "smallest" and weighing less than HTC Hermes, which now looks more like a brick. HTC's P4350 even if is not the best looking device from its class, it surely proves to be a step forward for HTC's designers. The same plastic compound makes the case of the device, so expect heavy damage on its "outfit" if you drop it. Although we can tell only by looking at it that its design has been carefully thought, we can't pass by some "mistakes" which haven't been present in the previous slider (HTC Hermes). One good example is the defective implementation of the QWERTY keyboard. While the keys are a little bit larger than Hermes', even if you keep the slider closed without getting the keyboard out you will easily be able to see between the two distinct parts of the device. There is too much space left in between the QWERTY keyboard and the upper display part which will make you think it will dismember the moment you drop it. Fortunately, that is not true, because part of the reason for the space between the two distinctive parts of the phone is a tricky innovation, the QWERTY keyboard features a retractile mechanism. This new concept of auto-sliding will considerably ease the slide process of the device making it more natural, thus you won't be needing to push the keyboard all the way from one place to another. If designs of both, Hermes and Herald are pretty much alike, let's see what makes the latter prettier. First of all, its measures 109 x 59 x 18 mm and weight (168 grams including battery) are making it slimmer and less bulkier. That's also part of the smaller 1130 mAh Li-Ion battery compared with Hermes' 1350 mAh. The same range of external buttons are placed a little bit different on the Herald. On top of the phone you'll find the power button and at the bottom, the miniUSB port and the open/close mechanism of the back cover. The right side of the device features the Communication manager button, the Voice dialing key and at the bottom of the right side, you'll be finding the silver-black stylus which is not telescopic. On the left, there is a microSD card slot, the volume control and key that controls the 2 Megapixel camera which you can find on the back of the phone. The keys under the display are pretty much the same as Hermes', only the design and the material used have changed a bit. Otherwise, you still have the same big 4-way control button, the two keys used for accepting and ending calls (green/red), dedicated "Start" and "OK" keys and finally, two contextual keys which are helping users navigate through the menu without the need of a stylus. You'll be surprised to find that Herald's keyboard is sliding in the opposite direction compared to Hermes', more precisely, to the right. The moment you slide the device you'll find a more pleasant keyboard with slightly larger keys that feature backlighting. On the upper left of the keyboard you can observe 2 leds that are flashing a blue light the moment you push the Caps key or the Control key. Just as HTC already accustomed us to, Herald comes with a full sales package that contains, besides the battery, 2 x stylus, a charger, a miniUSB data cable, a stereo wired headset and a leather carrying case. **Display and Camera** There are no changes regarding the display and both screens, Hermes' and Herald's seem identical in terms of size and performance with a minor exception: the latter's display is 1 mm short in length and width (5.9 x 4.4 mm). Other than that, they both feature TFT touch screens with 240 x 320 pixels resolution and 65k colors support. The screen easily changes to landscape mode the moment you slide out the keyboard and back when you close the device. Pity, but you'll have no chance of reading the screen in those shiny days, no matter what brightness you set on your display. If you think that the 2 Megapixel camera of the device has been ported

from the "elder" Hermes, think again. The camera doesn't feature any "fancy" capabilities such as macro mode, flash or auto zoom, so you won't be able to take pictures in the dark or take snaps of text pages. There are some improvements regarding the quality of the pictures such as the brighter colors and good contrast that make the captured images look much better than Hermes'. As you can see from the picture, the camera cannot focus on distant objects and the pictures look kinda blurry, but when you close-up on details you'll be most pleased of the quality. Also, don't try to take pictures when you're moving or the subject is on the move, because in most cases, you'll be disappointed by the results. You have the option of choosing between 5 types of resolutions ranging from 160 x 120 pixels to 1600 x 1200 pixels, 4 types of quality (which will have a direct impact on the pictures storage size) ranging from Basic to Super Fine. There are also some modes (daylight, night, incandescent and fluorescent) and special effects (gray scale, sepia, negative) that you can use to improve the quality of the pictures, but I strongly recommend that you don't use it unless you want to take some "funny" pictures. MP4 format clips can be captured in 2 resolutions, 176 x 144 (medium size) pixels and 128 x 96 (small size) pixels, but you won't be able to see them on a bigger screen, as the quality is extremely low.

Menu and Software HTC P4350 (Herald) features Windows Mobile 5.0 operating system with the Messaging and Security Feature Pack and the latest version of AKU 3.2. Besides the new version of AKU, HTC also included some third party application, more or less useful to the user. Some of the new features of AKU 3.2 included: the possibility of sending Contacts via SMS, upgraded Internet sharing option, pre-configured email providers, Task Manager which enables the X button to end running programs. If you check the main menu of the device, you'll discover pre-installed programs, the so-called "Tweaks" which will improve the functionality of the device. The Task Manager is probably the most useful as it prevents your memory from overloading with unused programs. Then there's the Audio manager that offers an alternative to the Windows Media Mobile. Like it or not, the new application will also enable you to set MP3 format files as ring tones. Adobe Reader LE 2.0 is also there and will help you read PDF documents. You can use the Voice Recorder feature, but the device fails its purpose because of the 1-minute time limit and lack of supplementary controls. Other than these, the device includes the Mobile Office package, Word, Excel and PowerPoint, Calculator, Midlet Manager, Notepad, Voice Speed Dial and Zip archiver. Any other third party applications you would like to have on your Pocket PC are downloadable from [here](#).

Communication Except 3G and Infrared connectivity HTC P4350 (Herald) features all other communication technologies such as: GPRS class 10 (32 - 48 kbps), EDGE Class 10 (236.8 kbps) USB 1.1, Bluetooth 2.0 and Wi-Fi 802.11 b/g. Tests revealed that most of these are not working at their full capacity. I have experienced pretty low data transfer speeds with the Bluetooth, no more than 27 kbps. In addition, the WLAN and EDGE connections were at least mediocre. Nevertheless, we should be thankful that the device gets all those options, and even if not at full, they are still offering a great support for people on the go. Signal reception is very good, but the sound is a little bit low even when set to the maximum, but that's a general characteristic for HTC devices, so you might want to use the handsfree when you travel for a clearer conversation.

Processor and Memory The Ti OMAP850 processor embedded runs at 201 Mhz speed, which is about half the speed of Hermes' processor. That's just one of the reasons Herald is much cheaper and ... slower. The 64 MB RAM and 128 MB ROM memory seems to be enough for standard use, and if you think you need more storage space, you can buy yourself a microSD card and expand the memory. The graphical functions of the phone are by far the best from its class (200 Mhz processors) as you can see from the screenshots. Unfortunately, the device fails to read small and big files which will translate in a "lagish" navigation through menus and low speeds at opening documents or different applications. Overall, the processor performs well for its class and except for the bigger load time and lags when using camera or opening more than two applications, you won't have any troubles.

Multimedia The 40 polyphonic sounds won't help too much to enrich the multimedia experience. Same goes for the wired stereo headsets that come with the device. I would recommend you to use another headphone for a better sound but unfortunately, the device only features a miniUSB port for attaching headphones instead of a 2.5 mm jack. Both the Audio Manager application and Windows Media Mobile have intuitive controls, are easy to use and feature support for AMR, AAC, WAV, WMA and MP3 files. The external speaker exists ... and can be heard ... but in the end, you can't expect too much from it as the device is clearly a business tool and not a multimedia one. Having this in mind, I won't give any qualifying for the sound, but I'm pretty sure this won't be a reason to buy Herald.

Battery This is a good example that a smaller battery doesn't necessary mean lower talk times. The official numbers for HTC's P4350 (Herald) battery are 200 hours in standby mode and 5 hours in talk time mode. I have kept the device with its display set at

maximum brightness without doing anything else and the battery lasted for exactly 4 hours and 45 minutes. Even if the 1130 mAh Li-Ion battery numbers are not near the official ones, that mostly depend on what kind of features you will use. **Impressions**The device is a living proof that HTC has started to improve their devices' design. Maybe it will reach the point when you will start to like the device more than actually need it. HTC P4350 (Herald) makes a good impression in terms of design, but lacks the power that is much expected these days from this kind of devices. If you are primarily looking for a medium-priced device that includes some of the above described features, then Herald can be a choice for you. Omnisoft's site offers the device for about USD 700 [here](#). **The Good**Improved design and updated software are among the positive characteristics of the device as well as the "standard" TFT display. HTC seems to improve its devices, each new model featuring better polished finishes and latest software. The Taiwanese company managed to cover most of the PDA's market and Herald was one of the best devices from the medium class range at the time of its launch. **The Bad** The multimedia part of the device has been totally forgotten by the manufacturer. Pity that sound and camera were left out and that Herald "benefits" from the worst of those. Overall, the price might also be a little bit high for what it has to offer, especially if we think about the newly launched devices which have better features and almost the same price. **Sales package**Pocket PC1130 mAh Li-Ion batteryStylus Extra stylusChargerStereo wired headsetCarrying leather case CD with softwareUser guide*Photo: Tudor Raiciu for Softpedia.com*