

By: February 10, 2008 Editor, Software Reviews

Is Rain aLive?

Rain Recording LiveBook Sketch: the studio you carry in a backpack.

Portability. The final frontier; or maybe not, at least not yet! Anyway, being able to run powerful applications when on the run is a very valuable asset these days and this chase for power AND portability has managed to influence almost everything in technology or simply tech-related, from MP3 players (being able to run movies nowadays), cell phones (turning more and more into a vast range of smartphones, actually), even fridges with internet connection and the like. And when it comes to the proper owners of "portable power", namely laptops, things are even more drastic than elsewhere. From larger and generally more efficient batteries to brighter screens consuming less energy and so on, laptops have grown to become even specialized. It's the case of the latest product from Rain Recording, the LiveBook Sketch. What's Sketch? Well, this new LiveBook is one handy laptop designed for the needs of sound engineers or audio professionals who are on the go most of the time. It's a mini studio, though fully functional: it's just the mini-size and the advanced processing power it delivers which separates it from the ten tons of equipment you'd most likely see in a proper studio. At the heart of this small 14" screen wonder you get a 1.6GHz Intel Core Solo Processor with 2MB cache, aided by either 512 or 1024 MB of DDR2 @ 667 MHz, running data from a 60 or 80 GB drive which unfortunately rotates at only 5400 RPM (while I was expecting at least a SATA2 7200). Sound processing is made inside an Azalia soundcard and the LiveBook Sketch has very extensive connection and inter-connection capabilities by means of 1 VGA port for external display, 4 USB 2.0 ports, 1 S-Video composite TV output, z1 1394 B type jack, 2 audio jacks: head phone or SPDIF, Mic-in, 1 RJ-11 for modem, 1 RJ-45 for LAN, 1 PCMCIA type II Slot, 1 4-in-1 card reader, 1 port bar III connector, internal mic, built-in camera. Nothing will be left aside with such an array! The Sketch SK1 (512 MB DDR) can be yours for \$1,299.95 while it's bigger brother, the SK2, loaded with 1GB DDR sells for \$1,399.95. Whether seeking to get rid of the gear which piles up endlessly in your living room or are a musician who wants to set his mind free atop of a mountain and even if you just want to demo your work at home or in any other place, the Rain Recording LiveBook Sketch is the tool you may have been looking for such a long time. Photos by rain Recording.