

20 February 2007

By: Sergiu Gatlan, Communications News Editor



[Nalu - Concept Madness or Mobile Revolution?](#)

A cellphone, a media player and a messaging device in a single body

Mobile phone concepts have always fascinated people as much as any [concept](#) of any kind would. In the case of the device I'm going to write about in this article, namely Nalu, I think most of you would agree with me that the fascination part has been altered with a pretty huge dose of curiosity of how this tritetraflexagonal (that is the name of its shape in case you will ever wonder how you should categorize it) handset manages to do all that flipping and flopping without breaking apart. Its origami-like magic movements are very well demonstrated in the video attached to the article and I suppose you'll also move at least one of your eyebrows up asking yourself what was in the mind of its designer. This Nalu thing is an all-in-one handset comprised of a mobile phone, a media player and a messaging device. It combines three different interfaces offering a phone keypad, a QWERTY keyboard and a scroll wheel, three things that according to its designer will fulfill virtually any mobile need you might encounter while communicating. When closed, Nalu has a wave-like shape presenting a cellphone keypad and a small display. When opened on the left, it unfolds a wide screen media player and a scroll wheel. When unfolded on its right side, the concept will reveal the thumb keyboard with a QWERTY layout I just told you about, a keyboard to be used when the user will want to send text messages or e-mails. The device is only 52 mm wide when closed and this means that if you ever had a [RAZR](#) in your hand, you probably know exactly how "big" it is. Therefore, taking account of this measure, we get the size of the internal folding screen of the media player: 104 mm wide, this being actually larger than the Sony PSP wide screen LCD. Thinking about portability and being mobile, the Nalu folding display is as large as life and the ideal screen to watch video clips on. In the closed position, the [handset](#) has a traditional candy-bar look but it is still able to offer some surprises. In case you wondered how you will be able to scroll through menus, this is the solution to your problem: gently scroll up and down with your finger's thumb in the large groove you see on the right side. Ingenious and also useful because this groove also provides grip for you to open the handset using a single hand. The different parts you see in the video being ripped apart from the device and wondering around the screen in the video are held together using magnets, a fact that gives it a more clean appearance without any noticeable protrusions. In case you're wondering why the Nalu name, you should know that "nalu" is the word for wave, the exact thing this device looks like when it is closed. Nalu has been submitted as a contest entry for the IDEA 2007 competition and if you have thoughts of stealing the idea and put it on the production line, think again: it is also patent pending (this could be something to change your mind but if you happen to be [Chinese](#), I seriously doubt it :). I won't say anything about its practicality or about how hard or easy one can find working with the Nalu mainly because it still is a concept and until I'll be able to get my hands on it, I can only guess what the actual experience will be. Therefore, I'll let you draw the conclusions by yourself and ask one single thing. Tell us what you think about it: is it a revolutionary concept or only the end product of a crazy afternoon?