

11 October 2006

By: Sergiu Gatlan, Communications News Editor



[Qtek 9100 Review](#)

The 9100 is an improved version of the S100 model featuring a left side slide-out QWERTY keyboard

The Taiwanese manufacturer HTC (High tech Computer Corporation) launched in the fourth quarter of 2005 its new product, at that time, the HTC Wizard. It seems that the device was updated several times, each of the new version receiving a different code name such as: WIZA100, WIZA110 and WIZA200. The main differences between the 100 and the 200 models refer to the keyboard usability, and the 110 one is the same as the 100 but lacks a digital camera. The handset is still available in stores under the various names like: the Qtek 9100, Cingular 8100/8125, T-Mobile MDA (US) and MDA Vario (International), Dopod 838, i-mate K-JAM, O2 XDA mini Pro and XDA mini S, Orange SPV M3000 and also as Vodafone II compact. The avalanche of different names for a single device, shows that it was in high demand from all carriers around the world. **Design**The design of the phone will remind you of the previously released S100 from Qtek, aka the HTC Magician, with almost the same measurements (108 x 58 x 18 mm). One thing that catches the eye at first glance is the 24 mm impressive thickness of the device, but that is not a motive for complaints because thick doesn't mean brick in this case. The left side slide-out QWERTY keyboard justifies the thickness more than enough, giving the users support for simultaneous press of several buttons and 39 keys with a rather strange arrangement, but you will most probably get used to it very fast and will enjoy faster typing speeds compared to the stylus method of input. The case of the 9100 has rounded corners offering a very good grip, but unfortunately the case is made out of plastic, and this gives a very sour taste. Anyway this plastic material used for the Wizard is tough enough to be able to resist to any dents or scratches. Overall, even if its design is conservative, the HTC Wizard still gets to sit in the front row of the smartphones line-up, with its 2.9 inch display and the one-hand usage of the device thanks to the intelligent positioning of the buttons and the Windows Mobile 5.0 operating system.

Processor and memoryThe performance of the HTC device is pretty good considering the fact that it runs on a Texas Instruments OMAP 850 processor working at 195 Mhz, and is equipped with 64 MB of RAM, 128 MB of on board flash memory. Users have the option to expand the storage space with the help of the miniSD memory expansion card slot. Even if the processor has some on-chip features which help the device to process audio, networking and some other processes and manages to make things go faster, the Wizard still feels a little slow at some moments. For example if you want to play some music in the background and want to use some other type of application in the foreground you will notice that the things start to slow down, giving the impression that the TI OMAP 850 is starting to, somehow, choke with all the information it has to process. This is due to the fact that this little processing unit, not used before the 9100 since the HP iPAQ h6340, even then with little success, is designed for low power consumption and not for intensive computing.

MultimediaThe 9100 offers the users a not so high-ranking 1.3 megapixel CMOS digital camera, with fixed lenses and flash light. The camera offers resolutions ranging from 160 x 120 pixels to 1280 x 1024, with the option to interpolate to a 1600 x 1200 pixels resolution, with the help of the integrated software. It also features 8x digital zoom when you are using the lowest resolution available, 5 to 10 seconds self timer, rapid fire shoot mode and some other modes of operation (auto, night, daylight, etc.). In my opinion there is no sense in using the interpolation method to achieve a photo resolution of 2 megapixel at 1600 x 1200 pixels because this doesn't get you a better quality. On the contrary, it seems that things are quite different that we might think. The improvement from other previous releases is the very bright light bursting out of the LED flash, but this is not an improvement in performance

because it doesn't go that far and you will observe that there is no change in image quality. The camera is also able to record MPEG-4 or Motion-Jpeg AVI video clips in a resolution range going from 128 x 96 to 176 x 144 pixels, all these at the same mediocre image quality. You can listen your favorite music on the loud stereo speakers or watch movies using Windows Media Player 10 Mobile, which comes in the Windows Mobile 5.0 software package. You can listen to MP3s and WMAs, and watch MPEG and AVI files (unfortunately you won't be able to listen music in OGG or AAC format). If you are listening to music or you are watching some movie, and you receive an incoming call, the media player will automatically stop the playback. The sound is quite good, one thing that I can tell about all HTC's devices, lately.

CommunicationThe Wizard is a quad band working on 850 / 900 / 1800 / 1900 Mhz networks, with an internal antenna, offering high speed data transfers through the EDGE functionality and the GPRS class B, both being the latest developed Multislot class 10 technologies. It also offers device to device connectivity through Bluetooth 2.0 (at the time of the release the HTC 9100 was the first PDA that offered support for this version), which gives the users the possibility to use a headset, transfer objects or files, use ActiveSync or access the internet, Wi-Fi IEEE 802.11b/g compliant (also the first one on the market to give the users the chance to make use of the higher speeds of 54 Mbps of the 802.11g, compared to the 11 Mbps offered by the 802.11b) and the MiniUSB.

The Good The good is represented by the Windows Mobile 5.0 operating system and all the software it comes with, by the Wi-Fi IEEE 802.11g, with its super high speeds. Also, its good looking 2.8 inch display that supports 65,000 colors, and the slide-out keyboard that will boast your mobile typing speed to the staggering 30 words/minute, make a good addition for the Qtek 9100.

The BadIt seems that the device is quite unbalanced when we're looking at its features. On the bad side we have a slow processor, but on the good side we have Bluetooth 2.0, we have Wi-Fi, but we also have a rather mediocre camera. Furthermore, the QWERTY keyboard is great, but unfortunately it's suffering because of the poor back-lighting and the lack of dedicated numeric keys.

ConclusionThe Qtek 9100 is a great looking device, but has some drawbacks which were corrected in the future models. If the handset had a faster and more computing oriented processor, a better camera and a better designed keyboard this would have been a real killer for the other PDAs on the mobile market. Overall it's still an innovative device, being the first to have the new Bluetooth 2.0 and Wi-Fi IEEE802.11g technologies, but finally ranking as medium in features because of its drawbacks. Even if the model is almost 1 year old, the device is sturdy and efficient, worthing its price. If you want to buy this device check [here](#) for availability.

Standard kit includes:- Pocket PC- Charger- Wire stereo headset- Replacement stylus- USB cable for synchronization- Horizontal belt case- CD with the software- Manual

Here are some snapshots of the device:Photo: Tudor Raiciu