i-mate Jasjar

One of the cool things about going to the PDC was the crazy deal that was announce during the keynote speech on the first day by Jim Allchin. An i-mate Jasjar, normally retailing for about US$1200 for the low, low price of US$160. And if you were one of the first 300 people to order (of course, I was; I was #78), you could get a bluetooth wireless headset for US$9.95 (which I also got). How can you say no to a nearly 90% discount, especially for a device that is so fucking cool?

Let me run down some of the features on this baby: First, it's a Windows Pocket PC 2003-based PDA. It has bluetooth and 802.11 wireless capabilities. It has two cameras, one 1600 x 1280 on the back for real pictures, and a 320 x 240 on the front so you can partake in video calls. Calls...yeah...did I mention it's also a cell phone? Pop your simcard in and you're also on the GSM network.

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The device can open like a clamshell to reveal the beautiful 640 x 480 screen and QWERTY keyboard. I'm still getting used to typing with my thumbs. The screen can also swivel 180 degrees and fold back down on top of the keyboard to act like a regular PDA. The screen will automatically re-orient itself from landscape to portrait when you do this, in order to maintain "uprightness" of the display.

I popped my 256 meg SD card that previously belonged to my camera in to the device and it happily played my MP3 media files in Windows Media Player 10. I'm really enjoying using my first true convergence device. I think I'll still use my MP3 player for music though, this thing is still a little more bulky than I'd really like to carry around with me all the time, but I can't really complain. It's the best portable device I've seen to date.

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