

Sensonic N520 GPS

MULTI-TASKING NAVIGATION

TEXT // KEVIN BOEY

With the increasing availability of personal navigation systems, it's getting tougher to choose a unit on its own merit. From large screens to lane-assist navigation to even Bluetooth, 3D and built-in media player, GPS devices are offering practically everything but the kitchen sink to the consumer. The Sensonic N520 featured here is no exception; it not only provides users with GPS navigation but is also capable of being a portable media device with built-in games and media playing features.

The Sensonic N520 comes with its own mounting kit and travel charger. Capable of connecting to one's computer to download updated maps and POIs, it also comes with its own USB cable. Having a microSD port as a way to store files externally, users using it for its media player features are able to swap in cards of their own. Capable of playing a selection of mainstream media files notably RMVB as well as MP4 and MP3s, it even has an ebook reader, a whole selection of built-in games and even a photo player, turning the N520 into an entertainment hub for the kids when navigation isn't needed. It even has a calculator built-in.

The N520 would be highly ranked based on its capabilities on paper. It is multilingual, speaking five languages including Hokkien and Cantonese, has 3D visualization of landmarks and major junctions, junction view and lane assist as well as unlimited favorites storage. That and its large screen size definitely put it in the upper echelon of GPS navigators. Having a matte screen, it is great even in bright sunlight, even at



80% brightness. Although the menu may lack the pizzazz of other branded products, they offer detailed information as needed. Using Malfreemaps as a baseline for its POIs and navigational duties, we are confident in the N520's navigational abilities and it comes with four preloaded maps - Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei apart from Malaysia.

Booting it up for the first time, we were delighted that it managed to lock onto nine GPS satellites within a minute. Thanks to the SiRF Atlas-IV processor, it achieved better GPS lock-on accuracy and speed than its peers without even breaking a sweat. Using the FaLoMe 3D engine, each loaded map can be viewed in three-dimensional or top down, with an additional travel computer mode which displays raw GPS data, along with travel as well as average time, distance and speed. One criticism of the system would be its weak interface and screen design. For instance, the travel computer is jam-packed with information presented in small and cursive-like fonts, forcing us to concentrate more on the unit than on the road.

The Sensonic N520 is a very capable navigational device, with great navigational tools and speed coupled with an all-round entertainment feature to keep the kids busy on longer road trips. Despite its small flaws, we would be hard pressed not to recommend this device, no doubt aided by the low cost of admission into the 5" screen GPS club!



A small flip-out stand is provided for desk-based entertainment



The left side of the unit has all the ports needed for its functions including a microUSB and mini USB port

Large screen, big features and small price makes this GPS system a bargain

AT A GLANCE

DISPLAY SIZE
5 inches

BATTERY LIFE
3 Hours

DIMENSIONS
133 x 98 x 12mm

WEIGHT
220g

PRICE
RM649

SPECIFICATIONS MEMORY 2GB NAND Flash (internal), 2GB microSD card // **EXPANSION** MicroSD slot (optional) // **WAYPOINTS** Unlimited // **SPEAKER** Yes; with street names // **FEATURES** Lane Assist, Voice prompts, Custom POI, Auto reroute, Video player, Audio player, eBook reader, Image viewer // **WARRANTY** One-year // **CONTACT** MCL Systems (M) Sdn Bhd // **TELEPHONE** (03) 8023 3800 // **URL** www.sensonic-global.com

Verdict:

8.5

SILVER
HMM
MALAYSIA

PHYSIQUE: 8.0
FEATURES: 9.0
USER FRIENDLINESS: 8.0
PERFORMANCE: 9.0
VALUE: 8.5

Available at

PLAZA LOW YAT
shopping centre

VERDICT SCORES ARE OUT OF 10.