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LG Electronics Phenom II

Great communicator with a big screen

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If you watched in admiration when LG proudly displayed Phenom, its first-born child in the Windows CE family, then LG's second generation descendants will make you want to adopt right away.

From a company that few people would have expected to bear an HPC, the Phenom was an amazing prodigy. With a large, readable screen, a built-in modem with excellent telephony support, and a very nice keyboard, you might have thought that LG had been making handheld devices for years. However, even the best parents make mistakes. For example, the first Phenom didn't have a backlight.

But parents can learn from their first child, and LG has used the feedback from customers, focus groups, and buyers to build the Phenom II/II+. And now, LG has come back with a second Phenom that makes even Martina Hingis pale in comparison. LG reports that the hardware for the Phenom II was completely redesigned to take full advantage of Windows CE 2.0. The Phenom II sports a 640x240 pixel screen that measures an amazing 7.1 inches diagonally (just .2 inches smaller than the screen on NEC's MobilePro 700). The outer shell measures 7.75 x 4.3 x 0.9 inches and contains a built-in charger, VGA out, a Type II PC Card slot, and CompactFlash ports. And, just as some might say that LG borrowed the built-in modem from Philip's Velo-1, the Phenom II now has the VoiceMemo feature, too.

If you're a traveling HPC user, the real excitement comes from LG's Phenom

This article is from the December 1997 issue of **Pen Computing Magazine** which also takes a look at the LG Phenom II, the Casio Cassiopeia A-20, the HP 360LX and 620LX, the Sharp Mobilon 4500, and the NEC

MobilePro 700. In addition, there was a status report on Windows CE after Year 1, a detailed review of Windows CE 2.0, and a whole lot of software reviews, tips, and tricks, plus Windows CEntral, Dan Hanttula's column dedicated to the CE platform! Get the back issue, or subscribe today!

II+. Adding a wireless CDPD modem, Li-Ion battery (the Phenom II comes with NiMH batteries) and slightly bigger dimensions, the II+ offers a very powerful wireless computing solution. If CDPD isn't your favorite wireless system, LG states it is currently exploring other wireless options.

The only area where LG skimped when making the Phenom's successor was in the modem department. The Phenom II has a 21.6 Kbps modem, where the Phenom ran at 28.8 Kbps. LG says that this will boost battery life and allow for a lower price. Besides, experience shows that modem speed isn't that critical on a Windows CE device.

LG has set a clear goal for the Phenom. "The primary application is going to be email, and that's always been our strategy," says Greg Ryan, Marketing Manager of LG's Mobile Computing group. And with the expanded communications features in Windows CE 2.0, it seems that Microsoft is supporting this strategy. Adopting one of the new LG Phenoms won't cost as much as you might think. The Phenom II and Phenom II+ will sell for US$599 and US$899, respectively. Planned availability for the Phenom II is late November, while the Phenom II+ is slated for a Q1 1998 release.

- Dan Hanttula

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