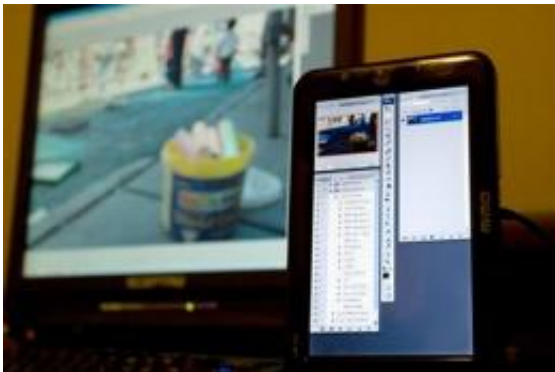


Review: Mini monitor can be a useful desktop annex

May 6 2009, By RON HARRIS , Associated Press Writer



A Mimo UM-710 monitor from Nanonvision Co., right, is shown next to a full size monitor Monday, May 4, 2009 in Decatur, Ga. (AP Photo/Ron Harris)

(AP) -- When you're surfing the Web, editing photos, listening to MP3s and tweeting, it's easy to run out of real estate on your computer display. If only you had a little extra screen - like a digital kid brother - that could show an auxiliary program like a Twitter application.

Now you do. All hail the mini monitor.

These diminutive displays are quite helpful with everyday computing tasks but take up less desk space than a full-sized monitor you might use as a second screen. And you don't need a special slot in your PC to connect the miniature displays. A basic USB connection handles it.

I tried a \$130 model from Nanovision Co. called the Mimo UM-710. The unit's [display](#) is 6 inches by 3 1/2 inches - 7 inches diagonally - and sits on a small, adjustable stand. It can be oriented to a vertical or horizontal position, depending on what best suits what you're using it for.

Unlike an iPhone and some other devices, the Mimo does not automatically detect whether you've put it into a horizontal or vertical setting. You need to adjust that yourself in the on-screen preferences for the device, but it takes only a couple of clicks.

Once it's in place, you can just drag items onto the mini-monitor from your main computer display. So if you set the little display as an extension of the right side of your desktop, then you can just pull a program window to the right edge of your big screen and it will appear on the Mimo. (Using it as an extension on the left, top or bottom of the main screen is also possible.)

To get started I installed the little monitor's drivers from the included CD, then plugged the Mimo into a USB port on my desktop computer running Windows XP Home. The unit also works with Windows Vista and Mac OS X.

A small Mimo icon soon appeared in the bottom right-hand corner of my desktop, in the taskbar, to let me know the unit was ready for use.

It was fun to launch various applications to see which ones would benefit from the Mimo's extra patch of LCD.

First up was Adobe Photoshop, something I use daily. I'm constantly revealing and hiding palettes that let you work with images, and I hate when these tools encroach on the picture I'm editing. Mimo was a great place to stash these items, though I found it best to keep the Mimo close to the main display so my eye didn't have to travel long distances from

the palettes to the image.

Another Adobe product that worked well with the Mimo display was Premiere, my favorite video editing software. It wasn't practical to put either of the two video preview panels on the Mimo, as it would take them away from the timeline where the details of the editing take shape. But the Mimo was a good place for the audio mixer and effects controls, which see less activity.

The Mimo display also worked well as a holder for Windows Media Player. I could play an album and see my music library on the Mimo screen without encroaching on my Internet activity.

Perhaps the best use of the mini monitor was serving as a holder for Twitter applications such as Tweetdeck and Twhirl, which organize Twitter dialogues. I'm usually multitasking while tweeting, so the Mimo monitor provided the perfect compliment.

Other nifty uses for the Mimo are to have it serve as the poker table for the FullTilt.com game app or to display Yahoo Widgets such as an RSS reader or clock and calendar.

Here are some things that are not practical for the mini-monitor annex: your e-mail client, a Web browser, a word processor. There's just not enough room to make good use of it.

The Mimo is available at the company's Web site, <http://www.mimomonitors.com>. This year D-Link Corp. is introducing a rival called the SideStage, with similar specs, though no price has been set.

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